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EXCLUSIVE HOTEL REVIEW

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ON HOLIDAY WITH

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IN MEXICO

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STYLISH AMERICAN BOLTHOLES

OUR ROUND-UP OF PLACES TO STAY THAT ARE YANKEE DOODLE DANDY











CHANEL



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ONTENTS JULY 2015







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On the cover A property designed

by architect Luis Laplace on Ibiza. To rent a similar villa, contact Bonder & Co (www.bonderco.com)

Photographed by Matthieu Salvaing PHOTO GRAPHS: ASHLEY BATZ; MATTHEW BUCK; LYDIA EVANS; DAVID LOFTUS



She's a fan.



LES BEIGES

NATURAL IS A STYLE



CHANEL



EDITOR'S LETTER



fter I'd come back from New York everything changed. The city had delivered all I'd wanted it to but had been too afraid to ask. Day had morphed into night had morphed into day had morphed into night. The Bowery Hotel (its lobby, our room, the lobby again) seemed to be in a state of hyperlapse whereby the four of us (my stepsister, my two nieces and I) didn't move in time but everything else did.

I made a new best friend called Eve, a model who was so pretty it was hard to believe she was the 'unmitigated psycho' everyone attested. A charming man called Lee came to join us at the point when we were all telling each other our deepest darkest fears and desires. 'Lee,' I said after what felt like 27 hours of being inside the barbaric yawp of our collective superego, 'you must now know more about the four of us than any other person on the planet.'

My nieces snuggled into his neck. 'So how long have you guys all known each other?' I asked. They unsnuggled. 'We don't know him at all,' they said, adding, 'we'd never met him before tonight. We thought he was your friend'.

And then, Stephen Dorff arrived and slunk into an armchair, as delightful as a warm drop of Coppertone in a tummy button on a summer's day. Can you name a single movie Stephen has been in? No. Irrelevant. Stephen is the New York cliché made party flesh. The fact that he was here with us was the sign that we were having the time we needed to be having in New York.

At some point we had to leave that damn lobby. There was a celebration to get to. My stepsister wore nothing extra but her usual clothes and a curly red wig, which was a bit silly because her hair is red and curly anyway. I wore my pyjamas, obviously. One niece flung on a cape which made her look like Evil Red Riding Hood, and the other niece transformed herself into a unicorn, but not a very jaunty one as her tassled horn kept banging into doors and lifts and it made drinking cocktails a logistical nightmare unless she was attended to by at least two other people.

The party, at the Boom Boom Room at the top of the Standard hotel, however, was fabulous. Manhattan stared at us from 360 degrees like a starry-eyed engine ready to churn us up into brilliant pieces of nothing. Until that moment, we were relentlessly compelled to let all our compounded energies course through our veins and crackle up and out through our skulls.

Well, that was my thought, until I saw a man dressed as a hot dog which made me realise how hungry I was. I followed that damn human hot dog around all night.

And then, as I said, when I got back from New York something had changed. At first I couldn't work out what it was. Was it that somehow I didn't feel so anxious? Was it that I felt less overwhelmed? Or, come to think of it, didn't it feel that I was suddenly much less angry, even though I hadn't even realised how angry I so often was?

All I know is I felt clean in my heart. And free. And who I was supposed to be.

This is the new issue of Condé Nast Traveller. For those who wish that New York came in pill form.

Melinda Stevens Editor





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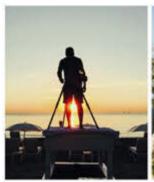
Inspired by this month's Snapshot story, we asked our contributors for their favourite ice-cream places





Sophie Dahl Writer, Cliveden (p40)

'Sweet Rose Creamery in LA is the stuff of dreams: it has all sorts of pretty, artisanal flavours – lavender, olive oil, carrot and cake – but for me it's all about the salted caramel. That said, I'm equally partial to a 99 Flake from an ice-cream van. And do they still make Feasts?' Sophie has written several books including the novel 'Playing with the Grown-ups' and 'Very Fond of Food'





Martin Morrell Photographer, Les lles d'Or (p102)

'I will reluctantly give you the details of my favourite ice-cream

place in the South of France: **Vilfeu Père et Fils**, just behind La Croisette in Cannes. I usually have the caramel *beurre salé* (salted caramel) or ginger.' *Martin has a busy few months ahead with advertising projects from fashion to interiors*





Hazel Lubbock Writer, Antwerp (p84)

'Gelateria 3Bis in London's Borough Market is dangerously close to my house, and open until late. The bench outside is my number one spot for people-watching while eating Eton mess ice cream in summer, when pop-up prosecco bars make the market even buzzier.' *Hazel is assistant editor of cntraveller.com*





Sivan Askayo Photographer, Antwerp (p84)

I have just been to **Sicily** where I learned about how gelato is often eaten in a *briosca* [brioche bun]. So I can easily say that my best ice-cream memory is having one of these in Cefalu, a great seaside destination on the northern coast.' New York- and Tel Aviv-based Sivan has travelled the world from Alaska to Zanzibar as a freelance photographer





David Doubilet *Photographer, Raja Ampat (p76)*'Castle Ice Cream in Clayton, New York. I like to put the top down in my vintage Morgan four-wheel-drive and drive there for chocolate-dipped chocolate ice cream. It's a village meeting point and a step back in time.'

David is an underwater photographer known for his work with 'National Geographic' magazine





E Jane Dickson Writer, Les lles d'Or (p102)

I tasted my first *semi-freddo* from a hole-in-the-wall *gelateria* by the **Ponte Vecchio** and thought I might die of sheer sophistication. I was a first-year fine-arts student and Florence was every last thing I wanted it to be. To me, *zuppa inglese* still seems the authentic flavour of romance.' *Jane is a columnist and features writer for the 'Independent' and the 'Guardian'*





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I SPY WITH MY LITTLE EYE

...something beginning with sea. Impassive stone sentinels have been keeping watch over one of Greece's wildest coastlines for centuries, but now one has let its guard down

The Mani peninsula, the middle finger of the Peloponnese, has a reputation for fearsome locals who are less than welcoming to outsiders. It's a stark, jagged cape punctuated with around 800 towers, which the great travel writer Sir Patrick Leigh Fermor – who settled in Greece's wild deep south – likened to 'bundles of petrified asparagus'.

On a clifftop overlooking the southernmost tip is Tainaron Blue Retreat, an early-19th-century watchtower that's just opened as a three-room guesthouse. The architect owners Kostas Zouvelos and Kassiani Theodorakakou came across the tower on holiday 20 years ago. 'The view was incredible, the silence intense,' Zouvelos recalls. 'The previous owner had

painted "for sale" on a cornerstone. We called the same day.' The renovation took five years: 'The locals could not understand why we changed the shade of grouting twice so the building disappears into the landscape,' says Zouvelos. 'We used traditional materials and techniques, but we didn't want the interior to look like a museum.' Instead, with exposed stone, wood and stainless steel, bedrooms are austere yet intimate and the dramatic infinity pool is suspended between rock, sea and sky. According to Greek mythology, the cave at the tip of this cape was the entrance to the underworld, but this feels more like heaven's gate. RACHEL HOWARD +30 2733 300461; www.tainaron-blue.com. Doubles from about £60



DO IT FOR THE KIDS

Taking the family on the road can lead to fisticuffs, divorce and long years in therapy. But help is at hand: these well-travelled mothers share their hard-fought tips from the front line



CHILDREN OF THE TRIBE

Emma McClean's free-spirited kidswear label is inspired by her beachy lifestyle

- ★ 'We're spoilt living in **Byron Bay**. New South Wales beaches
 are beautiful and usually empty.
 The best kid-friendly stretch is **The Pass**, with its easy-to-climb
 lookout and calm current.'
- ★ 'Bali is great; the locals are so family-centric. We stay at the Ramada Bintang Bali Resort, which is right on the sand it's definitely worth checking as some beach hotels aren't.'
- ★ 'To help my girls cope with the change in air pressure when flying, I give them honey lollipops you can get these in the UK at Planet Organic.' www. childrenofthetribe.com

FEATHER+FLIP

Henley Vazquez founded this website to offer kid-friendly hotel reviews: for places parents actually want to stay

- ★ 'Babies in cities are easy; with older children, find a guide and book a tour for early on in the trip. My daughter still talks about the **Context Travel** tour we had at **Kensington Palace** – we were told utterly gross stories about kings dying on the lavatory.'
- ★ 'There are plenty of great, less busy alternatives to the obvious **NYC** sites: Top of the Rock instead of Empire State Building; ferry to Governors Island instead of Staten Island;

Whitney Museum instead of The Met. But never, ever skip **Central Park**.'

★ 'Some people say rentals are easier for families, but I'm a sucker for a good hotel – the **Rosewood** group especially. I love the closeness of all of us camping in a small space, staying up late and eating cookies in bed in front of cartoons.' www.featherandflip.com





MR FOX

Lydia Gard edits this new online magazine for boys who want to get their hands dirty

★ 'I always carry **Pommade Divine**, an amazing balm that goes on anything: bruises, scrapes, wind or sunburnt dry skin. And **Rory's**

Story Cubes – packs of dice, which have different pictures (a castle, a tortoise, a key) on each side to inspire made-up tales – save carting loads of books.'

★ 'I totally get the big-resort fear, but sometimes the poolside music and camel tricks at places like

Club Med Marrakech La
Palmeraie work. The kids were in
heaven and we, of course, were
happy because they were.'

★ 'In the **Everglades**, my eldest drove a swamp buggy, ate alligator and called everyone "buddy". It's perfect for outdoorsy families.' www.mrfoxmagazine.com

THE LITTLEST

Art director Elizabeth Antonia's blog charts low-key LA family living and back-to-nature escapes

- ★ 'Most summers we head to the Pacific Northwest to rent a cabin on Bainbridge or Whidbey Island. It stays light so late there, but it's easy to tire out the children by running around forests, playing in the tide pools and feasting on fresh seafood. It's childhood at its most simple.'
- ★ 'Farmers' markets and pick-yourown are great for getting kids to try new fruit and veg. In **Baja California** we discovered a restaurant called **Flora Farm** in the mountains near San José del Cabo. Everything is organic and grown on site – my girls loved seeing where their dinner came from.'
- ★ 'At home we use a noise machine at bedtime. When we're away, the relaxing sounds of **Ambiance app** is great.' www.thelittlestblog.com EMILY MATHIESON





Dan busters

Amsterdam's new hotels lay seige to heritage buildings

Jaws hit the cobbles when W Hotels announced its designs on a drab former telephone exchange just off Dam Square. Things are looking up now that a former bank across the street has been added, and when guests arrive this autumn they'll be whizzed to the top-floor living room for check-in with a cocktail. Back at canal level, East London-born The Hoxton is hoping to lure tablet-wielding locals to its lobby with a host of 'Hoxtown' parties for its launch in July. Its warren-like canal houses have been doused in gentlemanly style with gleaming copper pipes and Vermeer-inspired paintwork. A stone's throw from The Hoxton, a 1930s trading office will be transformed into Soho House in 2017; alongside members-only perks such as a private cinema and Cowshed spa, it will house a Cecconi's restaurant. And by the end of the year the slew of hip bars and restaurants dotted around the pleasingly unmanicured Oosterpark will have a bolthole to match, in the shape of the Generator, housed in the imposing glass-and-brick building that used to be the University of Amsterdam's zoological faculty. MARK SMITH









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WIDEN YOUR W O R L D





park's CEO. It first opened in the 1860s as Hall by the Sea before changing to its current name in 1920, and is now emerging from a £18 million transformation after a decade-long battle to save it from developers. The Grade-II-listed scenic railway - not big or fast enough to be called a rollercoaster today, but the views are still a thrill - has been restored plank by plank. The other 17 rides, including dodgems and teacups, a helter skelter and a Ferris wheel, are a whirl through fairground history.

'The rides are only part of it, though,' says Kemsley. DJs will play at the roller disco; a circus and high-diving show will arrive for the summer; drive-in movies and festivals are planned, while street-food vans serve candy floss, sea-salt-flavour ice cream and, of course, fish and chips. Margate's

the summer of 1977, is designing welcome neons (her 'I Never Stopped Loving You' glows from Droit House on the harbour arm).

Sure, there's still a boarded-up Woolworths, pawnshops and shabby arcades, but among the new cafés and boutique B&Bs in the old town there's an undeniable feeling of optimism - and for Dreamland this is just the first stage. 'It's an amazing work in progress, but it is a work in progress,' adds Red or Dead designer Wayne Hemingway, the creative brains behind the project. 'It was always about more than the amusements.' The next step will be to restore the Art Deco cinema and bingo-hall space: 'But for that to happen we need people to come down and enjoy a day out at Dreamland again,' he says. Adult tickets from £14.95; www.dreamland.co.uk



THE DREAMS !

ARE OVER THERE

DREAM FOR

YOU TO SEE

IN REALITY

















ALL ABOARD

Is this the summer that will cement Margate's Shoreditch-on-Sea moniker with a raft of fresh, creative launches? We think so

HAECKELS

Dom Bridges and Alex Verier
make scents and skincare in
their Cliftonville lab (above)
using botanicals foraged along
the coast. They've even bottled
Dreamland's scent: the 23' 5" N
fragrance smells of rose with hints
of smoky wood and leather from
the railway fire in 2008. Their line
has a second home at Shoreditch's
Ace Hotel and now they're working
on their next project: a spa in a
traditional sea-bathing machine.
www.haeckels.co.uk

ROOST

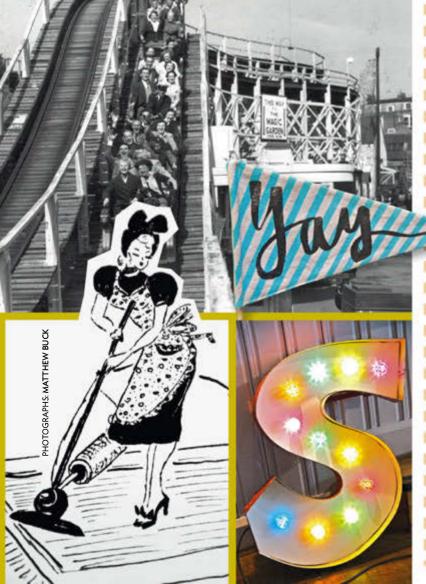
Margate's popular GB Pizza turns its attention to rotisserie chicken for its second spot, but with the same stripped-back style (up-cycled furniture) and a giant chicken rendered in yellow neon. www.roostmargate.com

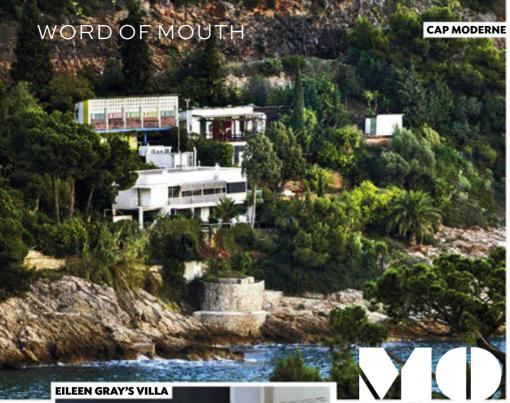
PLINTH

Artists Leon Hatcher and Emma Gibson moved from London to open a lifestyle store selling unique homewares, artist editions and indie publications. 'In Hackney everything was becoming diluted, people were moving farther away as it was so expensive,' says Hatcher. 'Margate feels more exciting with more possibilities.' www.plinthspace.com

AND MORE....

Margate Arts Club is a new social space for the town's creatives on Northdown Road (handy for nearby art hub Resort Studios) with workshops, music events and yoga classes. Meanwhile, Transmission Records will sell vinyl, art and toys curated by founder Spencer Hickman and artist Kimberley Holladay.







village

Modernist treasures from the masters of design are opening their doors in the South of France

he French Riviera east of Monaco is better known for its dramatic natural beauty than for its rigorous mid-century architecture, but where the Mediterranean crashes against the rocks and coves of Roquebrune-Cap-Martin lies a pocket of globally important buildings: Eileen Gray's villa **E-1027**, Le Corbusier's beach house **Le Cabanon**, Thomas Rebutato's restaurant **L'Etoile de Mer** (where this set often dined) and holiday cabins **Les Unités de Camping**. This summer you can visit these masterpieces of modernism – restored, together – for the first time. And in celebration of the relaunch, this sliver of coastline is branded **Cap Moderne**.

'The reopening of the whole site is important because some great personal adventures took place here as well as great architecture,' says Cap Moderne's Hélène Fincker, who has helped manage the project. The story behind E-1027 is as interesting as its sweeping, ocean-liner shapes, which still inspire architects today. Its coded name intertwines the designer's initials (E for Eileen and 7 for the seventh letter of the alphabet, G) with those of her then lover Jean Badovici. And a new biopic of Gray's life, *The Price of Desire*, starring Alanis Morissette (among others), sheds fresh light on her fascinating story. It depicts the often-tumultuous relationship between the Irish architect and Swiss modernist Le Corbusier, who stayed at Gray's house in the late 1930s and painted large murals on the walls, which she considered an act of vandalism. A couple of decades later, Le Corbusier built Le Cabanon on a coastal path near the villa, and drowned swimming in the bay below in 1965.

Such was the condition of many of the buildings that it's taken the Conservatoire du Littoral – the French coastal agency that now has ownership – the last 15

years to restore them. In the 50th anniversary of Le Corbusier's death, and as we see Gray in a fresh light, Cap Moderne is a fitting tribute to a place where the foundations of modern architecture were laid. CHRISTOPHER BEANLAND Cap Moderne (www.capmoderne.com) is open this season until 31 October 2015 by guided tour, advance booking only; Tuesday to Sunday between 10am and 2pm; tickets about £15



an act of v. coastal pat Such wa du Littoral

LE CORBUSIER'S MURAL AT E-1027

24 Condé Nast Traveller July 2015



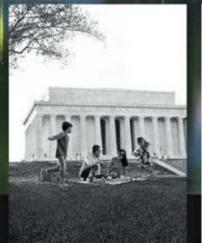




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Two of London's favourite old-school hoods are battling it out for supremacy

NOTTING HILL

Taking up residence in five interconnecting townhouses seconds from Notting Hill Gate tube station, THE LASLETT (left) takes its name from local character Rhaune Laslett, considered one of

the founders of what became Notting Hill Carnival. The celebration of West London goes further than just the name - art clustered on the walls of the 51 bedrooms has a local connection

> (including photographs of carnival sound systems) and food comes from Sally Clarke's neighbourhood restaurant. Opens August; doubles from £215

Golborne Road has become West London's foodie hub with recent additions JOHN DOE (left), which serves meat and fish from its charcoal oven, SNAPS & RYE (top) for Danishstyle fare and WEST THIRTY-SIX, a

four-floor hangout. On Portobello Road, Rose Mann opened FARM GIRL in May, dishing up a hearty and healthy menu. And nearby, EGG BREAK opens this summer from Ennismore, the team behind The Hoxton hotels.

The iconic **CORONET** cinema is in the process of being turned into an all-round arts hub. Fringe

theatre company Print Room, its new occupants, have transformed the second, smaller screen into a 120-seat theatre, which raised the curtain on its first season of productions last autumn. The listed main cinema space is due to reopen, fully restored, later this year.

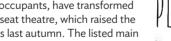
MARYLEBONE

Cheeky sister to Clerkenwell's ZETTER TOWNHOUSE, this 24-room Marylebone opening (top right) is based around the tales of (fictional) Uncle Seymour and decorated with an eclectic collection of antique furniture, art and curios 'amassed during his Grand Tour'. A rogue and a gambler, he had a love of women and horses, which inspired the cocktail lounge from Michelin-starred chef Bruno Loubet and master mixologist Tony Conigliaro of Bar Termini and Grain Store. Opens July; doubles from £258

American hotelier André Balazs jumpstarted Marylebone's makeover with CHILTERN FIREHOUSE last year; you can finally get a reservation inside the restaurant, but summer is when the courtyard comes into its own with a new oyster cart (right). Elsewhere, CAROUSEL (top) offers a revolving line-up of chefs. But the latest local hotspot comes from Jason Atherton: SOCIAL WINE & TAPAS, a wine shop/tapas bar upstairs and a restaurant/ wine bar in the basement.



Marylebone's upgraded with cult fashion names in the past year or so: Chiltern Street is now home to MOUKI MOU, an exquisitely curated concept store, **PRISM** (above right) for considered holiday separates and TRUNK LABS, the accessories arm of smart menswear store **TRUNK CLOTHIERS**. And on Marylebone High Street, the Americans are coming with new outposts of ANTHROPOLOGIE and J CREW.





THE TRENDS TAKING OFF AND THOSE RUNNING OUT OF FUEL

ARRIVALS 🚹

DEEP-SEA CULTURE

Look out for Jason deCaires Taylor's underwater museum off Lanzarote, while in Greece the world's first scuba dance show is planned for September.

NEW ORLEANS

Buzzing 10 years after Hurricane Katrina, check out Old No.77 hotel, St Roch Market and Solange Knowles' co-owned boutique, Exodus Goods.

POP-TAILS

Frozen booze on sticks is the way to keep cool. Try a Bellini at London's Bunga Bunga or fruit lollies dipped in prosecco at Conrad's rooftop in New York.

💢 DEPARTURES 💟

HOTEL GYMS

These are being replaced by 'gym hotels': cult fitness name Equinox plans to expand into workout-centric places to stay, with the first in Manhattan.

BIRKENSTOCKS

Orthopaedic slip-ons are out and Velcro hiking sandals are the flats to pack - see Burberry's bright numbers or go classic with a practical pair by Teva.

BAKING HYBRIDS

Dominique 'Cronut' Ansel's new West Village joint doesn't even serve the croissant-doughnut mash-up that he invented.





SOMEWHERE FOR THE WEEKEND? ROZCAADA

Like the juiciest Turkish pickle, this tiny, briny island is deliciously preserved. After years being shut tight the lid's off and it's time to take a bite. By **Jeremy Seal**. Photographs by **Nassima Rothacker**

HE COBBLED LANES of Bozcaada looked gorgeous, with their rickety taverna tables and sprays of jasmine backed by the façades of 19th-century Greek townhouses, but they did pong of fermenting grapes. The aroma was powerful but pleasant, as much for the end product as because most Aegean islands just don't smell like this any more. Checking in could wait; I would begin my time in this intriguing place, one of only two Turkish isles in the Aegean, by tracking this scent through the little port town to a whitewashed warehouse, a perfect period piece topped by sagging tiles. Beyond the splintered wooden gates, which stood ajar, I caught a thrilling glimpse of an earlier age: high tanks set in timber scaffold frames, ladders nailed together, and one sweaty labourer pumping pressed red grapes into a bubbling tank via an arrhythmic generator which he regularly patted by way of encouragement.

He beckoned me into the winery, explaining that the juice was from an island grape called Karalahna and would be ready for bottling in the best part of a year. The bad news was that there was not even a glass for me to try. Clearly convinced that this was no way for a Turk to treat a guest, even an uninvited one, the man presented me with some apples, which a friend had lately brought him from the mainland. 'From Mount Ida,' he added, as casually as though the sacred mountain south of ancient Troy were the local Co-op. I ate one on my way to the nearby **Armagrandi Hotel** (doubles from about £40), a converted winery, and it tasted very good indeed.

It was a fine start, apples and grapes respectively confirming that the native courtesies and traditional livelihoods are doing fine on little Bozcaada. This island is much less familiar than neighbouring Greek Lesbos, and for good reason; until the 1980s, the Turkish authorities banned foreigners from visiting.

Nine-kilometre-long Bozcaada stands guard by a notable hotspot, the Dardanelles Strait, which explains why my ferry passed an anchored warship as it made the half-hour crossing from the mainland.

The history of Bozcaada – or Tenedos, as earlier generations of Greeks knew it – starts with warships. The ancient Greeks brought the Trojan War to an end by hiding their fleet behind the island, breaking cover to conquer nearby Troy once the locals

UNTIL THE 1980s FOREIGNERS WERE BANNED FROM VISITING. AS A RESULT IT'S STRIKINGLY UNSPOILED

had been so foolish as to drag the Wooden Horse inside the city's walls. This was a memorable start, although it did condemn Tenedos to a life on high alert. Byzantines, Ottomans, Venetians and Greeks took turns at occupation – even the French garrisoned this strategically vital place during the Gallipoli Campaign of 1915. With a record like this, it was unsurprising the Turks were keen to put off outsiders, not least by renaming it, in translation from the Turkish, as Barren Island.

Few names are so deeply misleading. Beyond the crenellated castle overlooking the harbour, there's little evidence of militarisation. Enforced isolation actually appears to have done the island a big favour. During the decades that tourism was disfiguring the rest of the Aegean, with sponge fishermen chucking in their trade to stock sun cream or build holiday developments, the people of Bozcaada were getting on with tending vineyards and catching fish. The result is an island that is strikingly unspoiled, with one of the most drop-dead lovely Ottoman-Greek harbour towns in the region, a vine-covered interior and a blissful selection of sandy beaches, not forgetting the handful of family-run wineries. Add charming townhouse-hotel conversions such as white-and-bright Otel Kaikias (doubles from about £60) and Latife's Boutique Hotel (doubles from about £80), and it's clear that Turkey's island scene - laid-back, individual, elegant and consciously retro - has belatedly arrived.

I checked in at the Armagrandi, where loft-style rooms open into the eaves and the gardens have over-sized wine barrels refashioned as cushion-strewn snugs, and then set out to explore, dodging the tractors busy delivering grapes to the wineries. I began with a wander through the Turkish part of town, past the minaret, past the belltower and into the gridded lanes of the Greek quarter – a designation verging on redundant now that so few elderly Greeks remain – where graceful houses rise from wide steps to the squared-off bow windows of the upper floors.

I found a gingham-topped table at little **Lale Café** where I drank a carafe of Karalahna with a plate of fresh

Opposite, clockwise from top left: freshly caught shellfish; a bedroom in Otel Kaikias; a cobbled lane in the Greek quarter; a boat in the harbour; Otel Kaikias; fishing nets; tea; the exterior of Otel Kaikias; the shaded terrace of Hasan Tefik taverna

SOMEWHERE FOR THE WEEKEND? BOZCA ADA



Above from left: Asmali Meyhane taverna; fresh sea urchins foraged by the owners of Marti Restaurant; Latife's Boutique Hotel

> grilled sardines and a tomato salad soused in pomegranate juice. The wine was included with the meal which, in a country rapidly drying out from the effects of a spreading Islamic prohibition, felt most unusual. And that wasn't the only surprise; there was the hot sangria-style drink, and homemade lemonade flavoured with mint and a stick of cinnamon, and other unfamiliar concoctions chalked on the taverna-style blackboards, themselves so different from the utilitarian white boards favoured on the mainland. From the trompe-l'oeil tulips painted along the foot of the whitewashed walls and the Cyrillic characters on the signs of shops and hotels, it was clear strange influences were at work here. A rare fusion of Aegean-Greek and Anatolian-Turkish elements mixed with a dash of trendy Istanbul café culture? Whatever it was, the result was charming, not least when the feast ended with a flourish courtesy of the house: a tray bearing a glass of water, a thimbleful of cherry liquor and a shot of strong black coffee.

There's a buzz about Bozcaada. Over the last couple of years, openings of boutique hotels, galleries, stylish deli/ tavernas such as **Hasan Tefik** and the

THERE'S A HOMELY AND LOW-KEY VIBE HERE SO DISTINCT FROM THE BRANDED GLITZ OF BODRUM

highly designed bottle stores of prestige winery Corvus, their windows fronted with vintage Harleys, have certainly given the place an upmarket feel. But this has not obliterated its broad bohemian streak, as a stroll around the boatyard the following morning confirmed. I spotted a shack whose tenants, despite a roof weighted down with old tyres, kept stacks of cherished books on shelves by the doorways. The wise words of Sufi visionary Mevlana -'Whatever you're looking for, look within' - were painted in island blue on white clapboard alongside offerings from Omar Khayyám and the Turkish communist poet Nazim Hikmet.

Behind the castle I found my way to the **Ege Hotel** (doubles from £60), the former schoolhouse where rooms are named after an eclectic selection of writers from Aeschylus to Oscar Wilde. The Ege's owner, Umit Turan, is an

Istanbullu who had first visited the island in the early 1980s when a discerning crowd of Turkish actors, artists and even ambassadors were also discovering it. 'At that time it was a depopulated and dilapidated place,' he recalled. 'But what really hooked me was the quality of the silence.' Turan bought the schoolhouse and converted it into Bozcaada's most characterful hotel, a haven for creatives who want to do little more than read, swim and wander, and gorge on the legendary breakfasts, especially memorable for the exotic jams made from carrots, melons, poppies and aubergines.

This homely and low-key vibe, so distinct from the branded glitz of Bodrum on the mainland, was precisely my idea of a good time. So I hired a bike and pedalled off along the few lanes that criss-cross the island. I had been advised to look out for a winery called **Amadeus**, which duly appeared among the vineyards. I was soon enjoying a glass of white, an island-grown grape called Vasilaki, as Austrian proprietor and long-term summer resident Oliver Giraes rhapsodised over the terroir. His father had fallen for the island in the 1990s and wasted no time in setting up



Above from left: a tiled terrace at Otel Kaikias; an old house in Bozcaada's Greek quarter; a collection of artworks at Otel Kaikias

home here. The family had for years been making their own wines, as most people on Bozcaada do, before opening the winery proper along modern commercial lines in 2010. 'The climate is almost Californian,' explained Giraes. 'The growing season sees very little rain and there's a great drying wind. The summers here are as good for winemaking as they are for living.'

My bike tour brought me to a grove of plane trees where a sacred spring rose beside a chapel dedicated to St Paraskevi. The chapel was locked; the remains of this former monastery were a reminder of the other reason the authorities had for keeping foreigners away. The island's majority-Greek population suffered grievous persecution, particularly in the 1970s, forcing many of them to leave. The local saint's day, 26 July, sees some return to remember their community with wine and song in the shade of these plane trees.

St Paraskevi's spring, or *ayazma*, gives its name to the nearby beach, which is backed by shack-style restaurants, with parasols and sun loungers for hire along the shore. Further down the coast, the road switchbacks above a series of deserted bays. Ayana is a gorgeous sandy

strip, although the jagged reef in the shallows limited me to paddling. Best of all was Akvaryum, where bleached sand fringed clear waters rich with shoaling fish. Beyond the bay, I trod water and looked seawards to freighters bound for the Dardanelles – and riding at anchor pretty much where the ancient Greeks had once hidden their warships from the Trojans' view.

The history feels palpable on Bozcaada and it's tempting to see the expulsion of

THE WORDS OF A SUFI VISIONARY ARE PAINTED ON A HUT – 'WHATEVER YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, LOOK WITHIN'

the island's Greeks as the settlement of a historic debt – for what the ancient Greeks had once done to the Trojans. I soon came to appreciate that the islanders felt no such triumphalism. Instead, they mostly expressed a deep nostalgia for the impressive accommodation Turks and Greeks had once achieved here. It was there in the sepia photographs of befezzed Turks and Greek fishermen, which hung on the walls of boutique

hotels such as the Kaikias, and in the little museum where Magnum photographer Ara Güler's wonderful portraits evoked the island as it was in 1955. When I think of Bozcaada, as I often do, what first springs to mind is not the lovely town nor the elegant old hotels, with their high ceilings, stone staircases and charming rooms, not the vast empty beaches, the food nor the wine, but the sense of reconciliation best expressed by a modest display in the museum: a collection of old iron keys entitled Our Neighbours, each one labelled with the name of a Greek -Filo Yarinaki, Andonia Kalfa, Yorgi Istilari - who had once lived on the island but then made a life elsewhere.

GETTING THERE

Turkish Airlines (www.turkishairlines.com) flies from Heathrow and Gatwick to Istanbul. Seabird Airlines (www.flyseabird.com) flies from Istanbul to Bozcaada. A car ferry runs from the port of Geyikli Yukyeri to Bozcaada every two hours. Gestas (www. gestasdenizulasim.com.tr) runs passenger ferries run during the summer from Canakkale. On the island, hire bikes at the Aki Hotel Gift Shop (www.akihotel bozcaada.com) for £10 per day.































Get the scoop on the coolest spots to whip summer into shape

Top row, from left: the nostalgic vibe of The Ice Cream Bar in San Francisco extends to the menu too, with classic flavours (butterscotch, cherry) and ice-cream floats. Vienna's Eis Greissler uses milk from its 35 organic cows to produce creamy gelato. Black-and-white cone-shaped tiles on the walls of Eisdieler in Linz, Austria, are in contrast to the ornate ceiling paintings. In Girona, Rocambolesc is the ice-cream fantasy of Jordi Roca, the pastry chef at three-Michelin-starred El Celler de Can Roca. Sundaes range from Knickerbocker Glory to chocolate topped with gold leaf and caviar at The Parlour at Fortnum & Mason in London.

Middle row, from left: American cupcake king Sprinkles turns its skills to ice cream with red-velvet cones at this Beverly Hills shop. In Nakano, Tokyo Snow Picnic's whimsical pastel scheme belies its scientific preparation methods using liquid nitrogen. Ruby Violet in London's Kentish Town makes sorbet blooms with rosewater and prosecco, the best kind of edible flowers. The candy-striped interiors at Rocambolesc are the backdrop to six rotating flavours and up to 34 madcap toppings.

Bottom row, from left: gelateria Leggenda's Jaffa Port branch in Tel Aviv shows its industrial roots in exposed ventilation shafts and a huge concrete bar. Traditional tastes get a surprising twist (Szechuan-peppercorn chocolate, banana curry) at Morgenstern's in New York. Bright paper pom-poms look like curls of soft-scoop at Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams in Columbus, Ohio. Salted-caramel ice cream with nut brittle at Ruby Violet, named after the owner's choc-ice-loving grandmother. In Hua Hin, Thailand, Once Upon A Cream is modelled on an old dairy. FIONA KERR



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WHERE TO STAY

Venice Berkshire + Jeremy Renner

EDITED BY PETER BROWNE



















GULL SOARS OVERHEAD; the curve of its wings spans the blue sky. There is a repertoire of seabird calls and the faint whiff of salt in the air. This is Venice too. I am lying on a sunbed by a rooftop infinity-edge pool. Down below, mahogany *motoscafi*, the city's glamorous water-taxis, glide past fishing boats, a flotilla of sailboats, kayaks. Beyond, in the misty distance, are the towers and domes of the city and in the other direction, the Adriatic.

Out here in the Venetian Lagoon it is impossible to forget the *sposalizio*, the city's marriage to the sea. For more than a thousand years, merchants and mariners made their fortunes on Venice's trade relations with the rest of the world. Their fortunes, in turn, made it an astounding city. It is remarkable that anywhere else could ever wow Marco Polo, who was born here.

Much should be made of the geography, the largest wetland in the Mediterranean basin. The tiny archipelago that is historic Venice is held within the embrace of an unstirring inland sea protected by the natural defences of long, narrow island barriers. You couldn't dream up a more perfect design for a maritime power.

Deservedly, the lagoon islands – from northern Torcello to Chioggia in the south – are experiencing something of a renaissance. Amid the poetry – the pretty fishing village of Burano and artisan communities of Murano – there are islands that have passed through strange, often unspoken histories. One became a weapons store, which exploded and destroyed the island's former convent. Another was a prison and a quarantine station for returning seafarers. Many contained the ill within high, rather ominous brick walls: one for lepers, one for patients with infectious diseases; another was a lunatic asylum for women.

One of the larger islands, Isola delle Rose, is made from sand and soil dug out during the construction of the city's commercial port. Upon it they built a hospital for those with pulmonary disorders so patients could leave the congestion and humidity of Venice for this leafy, oxygen-rich sanctuary enhanced by onshore sea breezes.

After the hospital was shut down in the 1970s, Isola delle Rose lay abandoned for decades. That is, until now. Its latest incarnation is as a JW Marriott hotel, the group's top-tier brand which includes Grosvenor House in London. The hospital-to-hotel conversion is by Milan-based Matteo Thun & Partners, who had to contend with some crude institutional architecture, including the fact that most rooms faced the sea rather than the Venetian

skyline. Yet in spite of such inconveniences the Italian design practice has nailed the transformation. Spaces are lustrous and bright with unfiltered Mediterranean light; the interiors are refreshingly contemporary for Venice, which is still obsessed with velvet, gilt and brocade. Up on the fourth floor is the ravishing rooftop bar and pool (one of very few in the city, which makes this hotel doubly special), where I stay as long as I can get away with.

Among 16 hectares of landscaped grounds, the hospital's former warehouses, workshops and woodsheds have been transformed into big rooms with private pools, gardens and terraces: clever box-in-a-box architecture with stand-alone buildings housed inside the original red-brick walls. The design is clean but not minimalist: gorgeous parquet floors and luxuriant furnishings abound, including rather too many cushions (where to put them all when you fall into bed?). The most coveted rooms overlook the lagoon (I'll take number 506, please!) or the 1,000-year-old olive groves or the soaring neo-Romanesque Catholic church.

This is less urban bolthole, more holiday hotel with all the trimmings (three pools, a kids' club, watersports, volleyball on the lawns). There are four restaurants, including one by Giancarlo Perbellini, who has notched up two Michelin stars in Verona (and once taught me to make tiramisu in Vietnam; he gets around), as well as a slick cooking academy fronted by Micki Milan, who may sound like a porn star but is in fact the perfect culinary host, whether haggling over sun-dried Sicilian tomatoes in the Rialto or ripping out fish intestines in the hotel kitchen. The supersized spa – probably bigger than some hotels in Venice - makes use of the revered, high-performance QMS products.

But these are the frills. This property is all about the location, the space, the light, the air. It's about a new way to see Venice. The 20 minutes by *motoscafi* to St Mark's Square is no shuttle transfer but a voyage of discovery – as the captain carves a way between tidal shallows, salt marshes and bricole poles – to the architectural masterpiece that is Venice. The magic is that you can also retreat to the place that was originally built to help people breathe. In a way, it is doing the same today. Finally, La Serenissima is living up to its name.

JW MARRIOTT VENICE RESORT & SPA, ISOLA DELLE ROSE, LAGUNA DI SAN MARCO, VENICE (WWW.JWMARRIOTTVENICE.COM). DOUBLES FROM ABOUT £290

BED-HOPPING WITH JEREMY RENNER

'The Bourne Legacy' and 'Avengers' star, who renovates houses on the side, talks to Francesca Babb



'I LIKE SMALL
HOTELS: USUALLY
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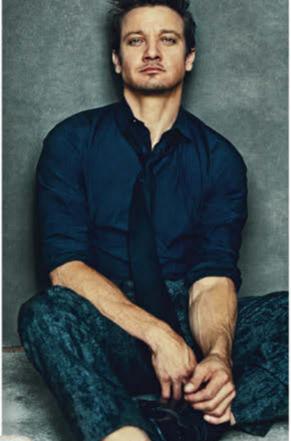
CHARLOTTE STREET HOTEL, LONDON

'I stay at Firmdale Hotels a lot, but mostly this one. They treat you well, the food is good and Charlotte Street is beautiful. The buildings are only maybe three storeys high, so you get to see the sky.' www. firmdalehotels.com. Doubles from £300



LAS VENTANAS AL PARAISO, CABO

'Because Cabo is so close to LA, I can go and decompress from work. It's private, tranquil and, well, it's Cabo man. Grab a villa, a crew of people and you don't even have to leave the hotel.' www.rosewood hotels.com. Doubles from about £410



SOHO HOUSE BERLIN

'I won't normally stay in a hotel for longer than a few weeks, but because of the size of the rooms here – they're giant, more like flats – I moved in for about three months. And the bathroom had a steam shower, which was great because I was banging my body so much doing stunts for Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters.' www. sohohouseberlin.com. Doubles from about £130

Jeremy Renner stars in 'Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation', which is out in July



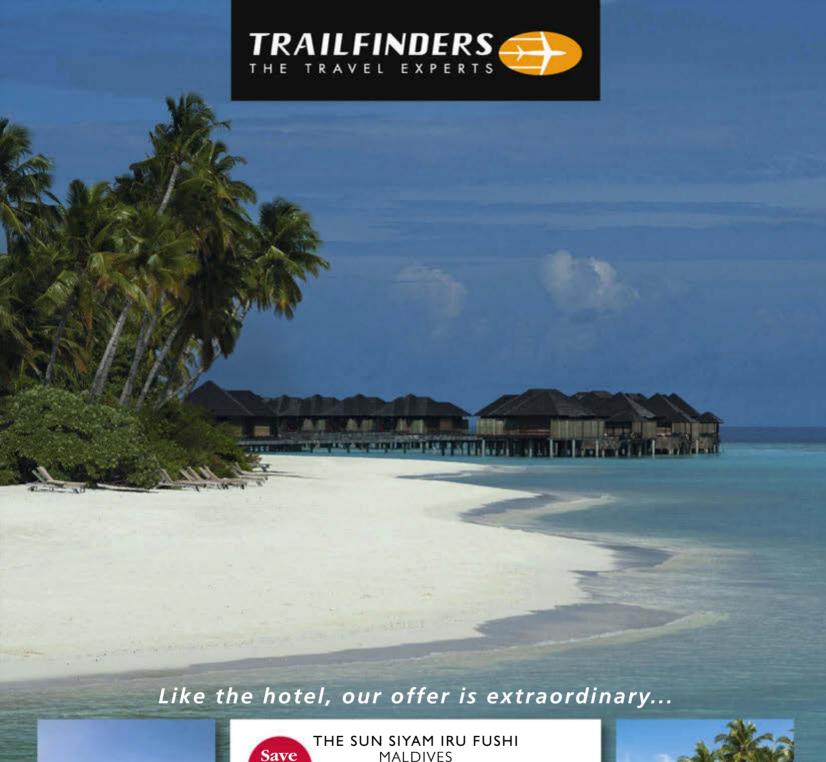
THE GREENWICH HOTEL, NEW YORK

'I've been to really big hotels and in fact I used to work in one in Hawaii, but I prefer the individuality of small places. The Greenwich is home away from home for me: the aesthetic, the vibe, the food. It's where I always go when I'm in New York. I kind of dig Tribeca. It's close to the action, but not right in the middle of it all.' www.thegreenwichhotel.com. Doubles from about £445



PARKER PALM SPRINGS

'This is a cool time capsule of a hotel: you feel like you're in the 1960s or 1970s, which I love. The average room here isn't that spectacular, but there are some great little villas at the back, which are comfy and cosy and private.' www.theparkerpalm springs.com. Doubles from about £165





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of malevolent governesses and rambling houses with mazes and orangeries. I wanted to eat possets, although I didn't know what one was. My mother had a friend who lived in the house of my dreams in Buckinghamshire and because my mum was in the middle of a divorce, I was often dispatched down its long gravel driveway to stay.

and a child ghost who was no doubt trying to communicate it to me; and (2) because there was a dining room, we were meant to eat there, nightly, in full evening dress.

'At Rowena's, we ALWAYS dress for dinner. And there's cheese,' I announced on homecoming when faced, in my pyjamas, with a microwaved ready meal. In retrospect, I realise my long-suffering

kitchen in their tracksuits.

And so it was that I was always a sucker for grandeur (and delusions of it) and then, as a grown-up, how I fell in love with Cliveden.

THE STORY OF Cliveden House is a very English one, a tale of indomitable women, victims of circumstance,









(Churchill, Chaplin, Roosevelt and Henry James among them), modernised it, and made it so comfortable a posh English girl would have shrieked at the excess.

Lord Astor gave Cliveden to the National Trust in 1942, although Astor descendants continued to live there until 1969 when the lease was taken over by Stanford University. And it was when Langhorne's son Bill was living there in 1961 that John Profumo, the Secretary of State for War, stumbled upon a topless teenage showgirl, Christine Keeler, by the swimming pool in the walled garden. Their affair was to topple the British political establishment. Keeler was a guest of Bill Astor's osteopath, Stephen Ward, who leased Spring Cottage on the estate for a grace-and-favour rent.

It's difficult not to think about all this history as you drive through verdant parkland towards Cliveden House, now owned by the Livingstone brothers, who also own the hotel Chewton Glen. The air here is heady with an odd mixture of historic lust and something very clean and U-rated. Maybe it's the families on a day trip having picnics on the parterre lawn while the shades are down in the Lady Astor Suite. Its British eccentricity is part of the estate's substantial charm, as the wayward child of a hotel group's arranged marriage with the National Trust. There is high opulence but also games of hideand-seek. The gardens, of a summer day, can be packed with visitors. But there are also stolen moments to walk on shaded paths alone, imagining who went before.

Y HOME IS NOT FAR from Cliveden, and I have seen it through a few incarnations. I've been both National Trust picnicker, and guest. My children learnt to swim in the pool. I stayed

AMERICAN-BORN NANCY ASTOR MADE THE HOUSE SO COMFORTABLE A POSH ENGLISH GIRL WOULD HAVE SHRIEKED AT THE EXCESS

➤ and at the beating heart of it, a building and garden of great Italianate loveliness, perched upon a bank of rolling green and overlooking the misty Thames. The original house was built in 1666 by the Duke of Buckingham, and has burnt down twice since then. But it was the American-born Nancy Langhorne who became Cliveden's best-known châtelaine in 1906 when she married Waldorf, the second Viscount Astor, whose father had bought the property in 1893.

Langhorne was a steely Christian Scientist, the first woman to take a seat in the House of Commons in 1919, and with her talent for riding and sage one-liners ('The only thing I like about rich people is their money'), one who planted herself firmly in British soil and kept growing. She filled once dour Cliveden with the sparky and erudite

in the main house when the current renovations were at their painstaking beginning, and I wondered how it would all fare, in a clucky sort of way. I have never felt so invested in a building in which I have no investment, and I think that is the power of Cliveden. I wrote to the manager, the excellent Sue Williams, to tell her how I hoped it would retain its heart. Apart from its obvious beauty, one of the biggest assets of Cliveden is the people who work













THERE IS SOMETHING OF THE SURVIVOR ABOUT CLIVEDEN, SOMETHING PROUD IN THE STONE: GIN FIZZ AND CHAPLIN, QUEENS AND SHOWGIRLS

➤ here. They are clearly proud to be part of bringing the house to a new generation.

I had never stayed at Spring Cottage until recently. It's a peach of a place, ripe for clandestine weekends or taming ducks on the riverbank with children. Stephen Ward was its most undeserving resident, and I like to think that an earlier guest, Queen Victoria, who used to stop here along the river from Windsor to have tea

with her friend and former Cliveden owner, the Duchess of Sutherland, would have had sympathy for Keeler's lot. I did, as I imagined her, watching the river go by.

Although there is big comfort at Spring Cottage, there is also a wonderful lack of preciousness, and for the time you call it yours, it feels truly like home. While the kitchen shelves burst with thoughtful things (in our case hot-cross buns,

macaroons, chocolate buttons and marshmallows), you can happily get on with it, cook your own food, and call on people as, when and if you need help. It's about old-fashioned holidays, *Swallows and Amazons*-style: forts in the garden and messing around on boats.

The massive and sensitive refurbishment over the last two years has driven away the ghosts at Cliveden (although maybe not in the Canning Suite). The Lady Astor Suite has the most breathtaking view, and the smaller rooms are gorgeous too, the Chinese Room, I think, the best of them. The downstairs part of the main building is a triumph; the restaurant and bar are Golden Age glories. André Garrett has brought delicious, unpretentious food with him from Galvin at Windows, and the restaurant feels airier for it. The suet is gone.

If I had my way, Spring Cottage would be on the chintzier side, with reclamation stone furniture outside rather than beanbags, but I've already confessed to my grander leanings, among them fantasy-decorating bits of stately homes, and it is undeniably comfortable. The main house is like a box of Turkish delight, winding cellars, and rooms each with their own personality. The gardens are enchanting. The spa at Cliveden is next for the nip and tuck, and as a bit of an old faithful of the pool, I hope it retains some of the past while looking towards the future. That's my wish for all of it, really.

There is something of the survivor about Cliveden, something proud and gorgeous contained in that stone: Gin Fizz and Chaplin, Queen Victoria and, of course, those showgirls. If it can exist like a house party, not turn too many corporate tricks and tread that fine line of belonging to everybody and nobody, it will carry on regardless. A bit like an old beauty at a party whose stories you want to hear, and whose hand you want to hold.

CLIVEDEN HOUSE, TAPLOW, BERKSHIRE (+44 1628 668561; WWW.CLIVEDENHOUSE.CO.UK). DOUBLES FROM £445

To delve further into the intriguing history of Cliveden House, 'The Mistresses of Cliveden: Three Centuries of Scandal, Power and Intrigue in an English Stately Home' by Natalie Livingstone is published on 2 July by Hutchinson and costs £19.99

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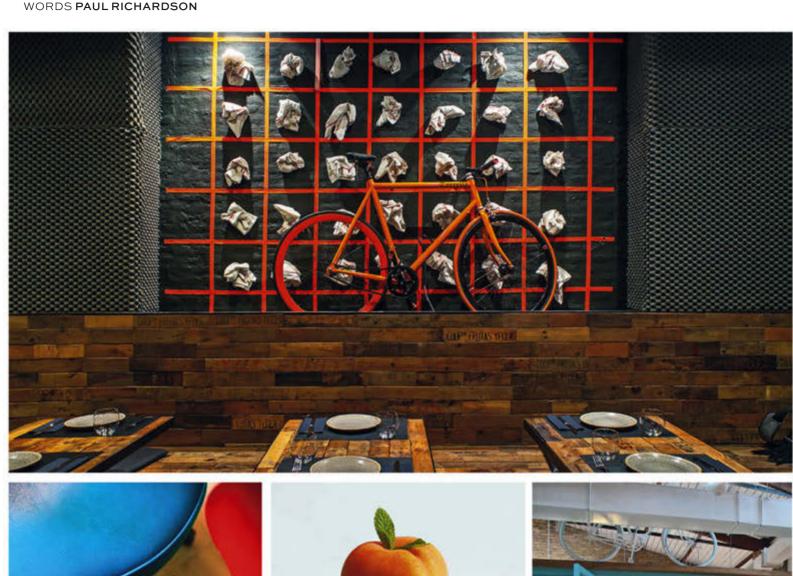
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NEIGHBOURHOOD ON THE UP

Barcelona isn't the only buzzing Spanish city on the beach: just along the coast, Valencia is upping WORDS PAUL RICHARDSON





Ruzafa, Valencia

its game as creatives transform this central barrio into its hippest streetscape



It says something about the pull of Ruzafa that Valencia's chef-of-themoment, Ricard Camarena, has not one but two locales in the barrio (his eponymous Michelin-star restaurant is next door at Calle Doctor Sumsi 4). Canalla Bistro has wooden crates on the ceiling and concrete paving on the floor. The diverting menu is based on sharing plates such as potato, cuttlefish and parsley bomba and roast-chicken croquetas. Calle Maestro José Serrano 5 (+34 96 374 0509; www.canallabistro.com). About £30 for two

■ To judge by the pareddown and minimalist interior of Copenhagen, its plain wooden bartop and lovely lighting (to say nothing of the name), the appetite for cool Scandi culture has reached the torrid south. For Copenhagen's legion of fans, however, what really matters is the food: Mediterranean with nods towards Thailand and Japan. And it just happens to be entirely vegetarian. Calle Literato Azorín 8 (+34 96 328 9928; www. grupocopenhagen.com). About £30 for two

SNACK

A little piece of Portugal in Valencia, maritimethemed La Conservera packs in the city's happiest eaters to snack on tinned

sardines, anchovies and tuna, while knocking back icy glasses of vermouth, Galician beer and Portuguese vinho verde. Check out the retro fishmonger's sign that reads Pescadería Pepe. Calle Literato Azorín 8 (+34 96 322 4442; www. laconservera.com)

- Now here's a good idea: wines by the glass or bottle from all over the world, as well as from unexpected corners of Spain, handpicked by star sommelier Guillaume Glories and ceremoniously served with some of Ruzafa's best tapas. The five-course sharing menu at **Entrevins** (salted-cod fritters with honey aioli, veal pincho moruno with romesco sauce, for example) is a steal at about £20. Calle Reina Doña María 3 (+34 96 333 3523; www.entrevins.es)
- La Más Bonita's new downtown locale replicates all the things the community loved about the original LMB near Patacona beach: the endearing decor in shades of seaside blue, the objets trouvés, the heartfelt commitment to fair-trade and organic food producers, the home-made muesli with almond milk, the speltbread sandwiches and organic wines. Calle Cádiz 61 (+34 96 323 6400; www.lamasbonita.es)
- Mallorcan Clara Ruiz's delightful little bar/café/ shop S'Alat-Bar i Botiga

INTO A FABULOUS PAELLA. THIS IS VALENCIA, AFTER ALL.

works like a charm both its bright and breezy look (island-sourced fabrics and furniture) and its Mallorquín food specialities such as pamboli (tomato-rubbed bread) and crisp coques with spinach, cheese, raisins and pinenuts, making this an outpost of the Balearics in the big city. Pintor Salvador Abril 34 (+34 96 303 4975)

SHOP

If you can't stand the heat in the summer, get yourself to Abanicos Carbonell, where the same family (now headed by fourth-generation Guillermo Carbonell) has been making traditional Spanish fans since 1810. The little shop, a real neighbourhood classic, is crammed with fans at every price and in every possible style, from hardcore trad to funky silk ones hand-painted by Guillermo's daughter Paula. Calle Castellón 21 (+34 96 341 5395; www. abanicoscarbonell.com)

■ The multi-coloured retro-chic of the Mercat de Russafa building (the Valencian spelling of Ruzafa), a great example of Mediterranean brutalism dating from 1957, has become a symbol of the barrio around it. Inside you will find a Valencian produce market in all its glory: check out the sweet-potato and



EVERY NEW HOOD MUST HAVE AN ORGANIC MARKET, AND HERE IS NO EXCEPTION. ON SUNDAY MORNINGS THE PARISH PITCHES UP AT EL PATIO DE RUZAFA (CALLE LITERATO AZORIN 13, NEXT TO UBIK CAFE, 10AM-3PM) TO STOCK UP ON FRUIT AND VEG, PULSES, OILS, CHEESES, BREAD AND WINE. WORKSHOPS ON BREAD- OR SOUP-MAKING AND ROOFTOP VEG GARDENING ADD TO THE FUN. AT LUNCHTIME EVERYONE TUCKS

NEIGHBOURHOOD ON THE UP Ruzafa, Valencia

- roasted-pumpkin stalls, the olives and pickled encurtidos and the magnificent veg from nearby farms. Plaza Barón de Cortés (+34 96 374 4025; www.mercatde russafa.com)
- In a city whose love of colour and detail verges on the kitsch, the minimalist simplicity of the

Siemprevivas showroom window on might stop you in your tracks. Valencian designer Adrián Salvador's exquisitely cut clothes are attracting attention not just in Spain but also in Paris and New York. Calle Doctor Serrano 13 (+34 62 974 6490; www. siemprevivas.es)

DRINK

Calle Cadiz, the funky main street of the area, hums with original proposals such as Tula Café, a congenial hybrid of coffee shop and music bar that is open all day, every day. Ruzafa's modernos have grown fond of Tula's milkshakes and granizados, its grown-up cocktails and eclectic soundtrack, from Massive Attack to Melody Gardot. Calle Cádiz 62 (+34 96 341 5095; www. tulacafe.es)

■ Café Berlin, the barrio's best-loved boozer, is stuffed with mismatched furniture in a modern style (there's even a swing). It is all things to local bohos, with exhibitions, a library, live music, free Wi-Fi and knitting lessons on Wednesday afternoons. The Berlin's Mojitos may be the best in town; and at about £1 for two, its Mahou beer may be the cheapest. Calle Cádiz 22 (+34 96 381 0024)

SEE

Ruzafa might be short on museums and monuments, but just north of it lies a railway station that's something to see. **The Estación del** Norte is a modernist masterpiece dating from 1917, whose grand façade has motifs of oranges and orange blossom (very Valencia), while the ticket hall is a bejewelled marvel of local craftsmanship in glass, ceramic tiles, mosaic and wood. *Calle Xàtiva 24*

■ Founded in 2011, Espai Tactel has quickly become Ruzafa's leading purveyor of new Spanish art and is often touted as Valencia's most forwardthinking contemporary gallery. Uncompromising modernity is part of the deal, and recent shows have included up-andcoming local names such as Nelo Vinuesa, Sergio Belinchón and Rosana Antolí, Calle Denia 25 (+34 96 395 8808; www. espaitactel.com)

SLEEP

In the absence of a boutique hotel or two in the area - these will surely not be long in coming -El 16 Ruzafa is a fine alternative. There are five apartments sleeping two to six people in an early-20th-century modernist building with a chic monochrome colour scheme. There's also a rooftop terrace you will want to take your drinks up to. Calle Sueca 16 (+34 96 351 9612; www. nwtspain.com). Doubles from about £50

■ Rooms at the shiny-shiny Petit Palace
Germanías are very
comfortable and wellequipped. The doubles
with a balcony have great
views and the hotel
couldn't be handier for
the attractions of raucous
Ruzafa. It's also dogfriendly, a rarity in Spain.
Calle Sueca 14 (+44 203
499 5871; www.hotelpetit
palacegermanias.com).
Doubles from about £60



Clockwise from above: La Conservera tapas restaurant; the brutalist architecture of Mercat de Russafa; El 16 Ruzafa; Canalla Bistro; tinned fish at La Conservera; Café Berlin; melted Camembert salad at La Más Bonita; *Incomplétudes 4* by Vicky Uslé at Espai Tactel

















Julián Romero Martin

CAFE AND GALLERY OWNER

'I was born in Ruzafa 37 years ago, so I've seen its evolution at first hand. I used to go to the market with my grandmother. When I opened Trentatres Gallery in 2007 there wasn't much going on; the change has been incredible. I love Circa for brunch - it's kept its original façade of an old greengrocers and **Dulce de Leche**, an Argentinian pastry shop, for the strawberry and lemon tart. For a beer and tapas at midday, La Conservera is fantastic, and local people love the agua de Valencia (cava with orange juice) and the coca de la iaia (crisp vegetable tart) at my Café 33. I also help run Russafa Escènica, a performing-arts festival held every September in unconventional spaces. What do I love about my barrio? The fact that it's so real, not

just a shop window.' www.russafaescenica.com



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SOPHIE MILROM

Just when the juice craze couldn't get any more frenzied, this fresh-faced New Yorker has given it a cool twist with healthy ice lollies. Here are her worldwide feelgood fixes



ON HOTELS

'The Amanpuri in Phuket is the most wellbeing-focused hotel I know. The food is pure and fresh but the staff will also kick your butt in the gym. I was surprised to find a lot of healthy-eating options at the Encore in Las Vegas – apparently the owner is vegan. The Mayflower Grace in Connecticut is lovely for the weekend; it's so serene. And The Norman in Tel Aviv, above, is another favourite. I've also stayed in great Airbnbs, including a house on the edge of a cliff in Big Sur. Otherwise, I stick to brands I love such as One&Only. Its Los Cabos property, below right, is lovely.'



ON RESTAURANTS

'In Rome the best place I've found for healthy food is Ginger, below. I don't hold back on the pasta when I'm in Italy, so it is good to know somewhere that serves fresh, light dishes, delicious salads and açaí bowls. In London, my go-to is The Good Life Eatery - the smoothies are incredible. In Aspen. it is Pyramid Bistro, a tiny spot in a bookshop with a really creative menu. One of my favourite cities for food is Los Angeles. Gjusta in Venice Beach is the place to go for the most perfect breakfast, sitting on crates in the sunny courtyard. At French restaurant Petit Trois, chef Ludo Lefebvre made me an omelette so perfect I felt like I'd never tasted one before. He is the egg whisperer. But one of the top experiences I've ever had in LA was at Neptune's Net in Malibu. It is a roadside seafood restaurant where a lot of bikers stop. There are two options, "steamed" and "fried", and it has the most spectacular view.'



'I started practising yoga at Yoga Vida in New York six years ago and it keeps me sane. I also love SoulCycle classes – it's the only high-intensity exercise I do. I can't run. I've walked 15 miles in a day without a problem but can't jog for one! I also see an acupuncturist, which I highly recommend to anyone with an injury or simply for stress management.'



ON SHOPPING

'I go to LifeThyme Natural Market in the West Village – the staff are very knowledgable about every product they sell. My favourite sportswear brand is Zara Terez, a NYC-based company that also makes fun patterned swimsuits. I have a pair of their emoji-print leggings and people are always stopping me to ask where I bought them.'

ON MOTIVATION

'My friends have given me tons of inspiration and advice throughout the process of launching EatPops. Leandra Medine is a close friend and I've learnt a lot from watching her build her Man Repeller brand over the years. And it was one of the founders of Sweetgreen restaurant, Charlie Munger, who told me to "take a simple idea and take it seriously".'



ON HEALTH

'i'm always very curious about vitamins and have found a few that really make a difference. I take Pharmax HLC High Potency capsules as a probiotic and Rosavin for energy. EatPops has just launched a new flavour called Super Detox, which contains açaí, goji and noni, three of the ultimate superfoods. Miranda Kerr has said that noni juice is her secret beauty ingredient. But my favourite flavour has to be Green Detox. It's a good snack after a SoulCycle class.'



Ben Gorham, founder of this hip fragrance brand, doesn't pretend to be a master nose of the perfume industry. What he clearly excels at, however, is being a modern tastemaker. He has the ability to capture a scent and a sense of timing like no one else. Standouts include Sunday Cologne, 1996 and his recent collaboration with Oliver Peoples. Sunglasses box set, £400. www.byredo.com. For Ben's insider LA tips, go to www.cntraveller.com/LAguide







The fashion label: Studio Nicholson

Just like discovering how a great architect or interior designer can make you think differently about your own house, finding out about Nick Wakeman's collection will transform the way you consider your wardrobe. Her designs are the perfect combination of practical and uncompromising. Culottes £245; crepe top, £245. www.studionicholson.com

The hotel group: Aman Resorts Aman always captures the right heat and talent at the right moment. The low-key openings of these far-flung but brilliantly positioned places create the same sense of anticipation as a new Bond film. Now with a Russian owner, its next new property is in the Dominican Republic. www.amanresorts.com



The pin-up: Rosetta Getty

The Getty name always inspires intrigue, but the wife of Balthazar need only let her fashion line, left, do the talking. With strong silhouettes, sharp tailoring and nods to Hollywood style, the Getty girl comes across as powerful but private. www.rosettagetty.com



These minimalist brands are having maximum impact, staying astutely under the radar, calmly creating a stir



Veja, Svilu, Diarte, Terials and Puc might sound like words from a fantastical made-up language but they are just some of the ethical fashion labels chosen by Holly Allenby to create the most classy new retail site. www.the-acey.com



The swimwear: Eres

This French label is all about the fabric, the fit and the simple style. You will never find frills or flouncy prints, sequins or crochet here. This is serious swimwear (made in the same Croissy-Beaubourg factory as Chanel): grown-up and sophisticated. Swimsuit, £217. www.eresparis.com



SHOP WATCH: RIALTO LIVING

Swedish designers Klas Käll and Barbara Bergman opened the first concept store in Palma, Mallorca, back in 2007. In a former cinema, the shop has now been integrated with the 18th-century baroque palace next door to reveal 10 impressive new spaces, in which the duo have merged local artwork and furniture from Mallorcan carpenters with an edit of international fashion and beauty brands. The Rialto café is also part of the refresh and serves seasonal dishes in the palace's original courtyard. If the interiordesign service is an indugence too far, bring home Coa Negra wine, produced from grapes grown on the couple's land, and homemade olive oil to maintain your holiday mojo. Carrer Sant Feliu 3C. www.rialtoliving.com







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STYLE FILE



Do you ever detox?

'Nutritionist Kimberly Snyder has changed my life. She's totally amazing and introduced me to the Vitamix blender. Every morning I'll put in an entire bag of

spinach, along with a lemon, some celery and turmeric and either berries or an apple, before blending the crap out of it. It's the best breakfast you can have.'

Where's your favourite place for a good night's sleep?

'I always stay at the Four Seasons Hotel George V in Paris. The rooms are opulent and the beds are so comfy.'

What's your go-to scent? 'I love Givenchy's Very Irrésistible L'Eau en Rose. It's subtle and I adore the bottle.'

Is there a fragrance that reminds you of being on holiday?

'My sense of smell is so strong that I'm sensitive to everything, but I really love rose, hibiscus, gardenia and jasmine. I can't get enough of these flowers. They take me back to childhood holidays – such an intense memory, and always a positive one.'





BEAUTY KIT: AMANDA SEYFRIED

Do you ever have a bad hair day?

The star of 'Mamma Mia', 'Les Misérables' and 'Mean Girls' shares her secrets with Tabitha Joyce

Are there any treatments that you swear by?

'I love reflexology, cupping and acupuncture. Getting acupuncture around your ovaries when you have your period relieves the pain. I also see a homeopath but I don't get facials. And every two weeks I get my legs waxed; it's the only maintenance I really do.'

What's your favourite nail colour? 'I have about 50 nail polishes, but weirdly I only ever wear nude. Givenchy's Beige Mousseline is beautiful.'

How do you look after your skin on a long-haul flight?

'L'Occitane makes great soaps – my favourite is the lavender. I try not to wear make-up and just apply a hi-tech moisturiser such as Clé de Peau Beauté La Crème. And like everyone else, I drink lots of water.' How do you look after your hair now?
'Ten years later, it's back to

its natural colour. I don't use masks but I love hair oils. I use L'Oréal Paris Elvive Extraordinary Oil Mist after a shower. And Kevin Murphy's Fresh Hair Dry Cleaning Spray is brilliant in an emergency.'

What is your biggest indulgence? 'A bagel with cream cheese. It would be my death-row meal.'

What do you do to get in shape for a holiday?

'I have to work hard to keep trim so I exercise every day. Some days I lift weights for an hour with my trainer, on others I run; I'm lucky because I live right next to a canyon. Before a holiday I'll attempt to spend time on the Versaclimber exercise machine but one minute is all I can really manage. In London I work out with Dalton Wong at Twenty Two Training – he really pushes me to my limit. I like that each year I get more athletic, feel stronger and look better than I did the year before.'

Amanda Seyfried is the face of Givenchy Very Irrésistible

From top left: Lavender Bonne Mère Soap, £4.50, L'Occitane en Provence (www. loccitane.co.uk); Very Irrésistible L'Eau en Rose, £54.50, Givenchy (www.harrods.com); La Crème, about £360, Clé de Peau Beauté (www.cledepeaubeaute.com); Elvive Extraordinary Oil Mist, £9.99, L'Oréal Paris (www.boots.com)

PHOTOGRAPH: NORMAN JEAN ROY/TRUNK ARCHIVE





EDITED BY

DAVID ANNAND



MAN ON A MISSION

Cathal McAteer, founder of fashion label Folk, on the ups and downs of social climbing in the Highlands

in at the foot of Bidean nam Bian, a mountain just south of Glencoe. I'm with buddies, including the sculptor Paul Vanstone. Two or three times a year we take on a climbing expedition. We've done the Dolomites, the Pyrenees and Snowdonia, but this is our first time in Scotland, my home country.

Paul's climbed the Matterhorn and Mont Blanc. He's our mountain goat, and he's planned a route that will take us to the summit over the Buttress Ridge; but to get there we're going to need an ice pick and crampons, which we had great fun buying before we left.

Before we start climbing, there's a two-hour walk on the flat. The ground is squelchy and there are rivers and streams to be navigated. It's hard-going but gorgeous: a strange, exciting landscape blanketed in white, with rusty brown heather breaking through. The only animals are beautiful deer that look incredible against the snow. The mountain is like a kid's drawing. It just goes up. At only 1,200 metres it's not high

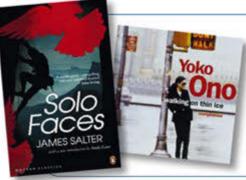
compared to, say, anything in the Alps, but the weather changes so fast: one minute the sun's shining, the next hailstones are smashing into your face.

And there's a problem. I get my crampons out only to discover I've been given two left feet. It's my first time wearing them and I've got to navigate near-vertical ice sheets with no spikes on one foot.

We plough on regardless. Because of the heavy snow, everything has massive overhangs, but even with just one crampon I make good progress until we're about halfway up. We're on a near-vertical face of ice, with a huge drop

below us, when the snow blows in. We're whited out instantly. It's pretty scary stuff, but to my surprise it's not a sheer face that provides the real heart-stopping moment. That comes when we arrive at a narrow ridge with sheer drops on either side. It's only six feet long but it's downhill, covered in snow, and I have to walk it like a tightrope, in the howling wind.

Eventually we get to the top, where there's no visibility at all, just white in all directions. I say to Paul, 'That was pretty hairy, wasn't it?' He looks at me with a smile on his face. 'Fear and doubt are there for a reason,' he deadpans. It takes three hours to get down and when we finally do we miss the path, because of the storm, and discover we're nine miles from the car and it's getting dark. Thankfully, we hitch a lift in the only vehicle we've seen for hours and get back in time for a pint at the Kings House Hotel. The atmosphere in the bar is great – there's a particular kind of person in Glencoe during the winter. But after a climb like that, two pints and you're done. www.folkclothing.com



READ THIS Solo Faces. This 1979 novel by former American fighter pilot James Salter explores, in glittering prose, the obsessive single-mindedness of men who climb rocks.

DOWNLOAD THIS 'Walking on Thin Ice'. Climbers taking their fate into their own hands will appreciate Yoko Ono's ahead-of-its-time 1981 single, which explores the vicissitudes of destiny to a choppy, urgent beat.

GET THE LOOK: SEAN CONNERY

Attract your own Ursula Andress with Bond's best beach outfit from Dr No



Cotton piqué polo shirt, £270, **Bottega Veneta** (www.mrporter.com); chinos, £145, **JW Brine** (www.matchesfashion.com); Sea-Dweller 4000 watch, £8,050, **Rolex** (www.rolex.com); Colonia Ambra cologne, £150 for 100ml, **Acqua di Parma** (www.acquadiparma.com)



DAVID'S POSTCARD FROM... DUNWICH

The churning sea is brown, the colour of weak tea. I'm on the beach at Dunwich, looking out, wondering what might have been. It's just a tiny village now with fewer than a hundred permanent residents and one brilliant pub, but Dunwich was once one of England's great ports. According to the Domesday Book its population was 3,000 in 1086, making it pretty much the Rotterdam of its day. Unfortunately for Dunwich, fings weren't wot they used t'be as early as 1286, when a storm surge started the land erosion that would, over time, see the bulk of the town and its eight churches slowly swallowed by the sea, the last steeple crumbling into the water in 1919. Overhead gulls whoop and wing but otherwise the beach is mine. It's not quite Shelley's 'Nothing beside remains' territory, as the lone and level sands immediately behind us are home to an imposing café in which we've recently enjoyed a brew and a few choice words about their collection of tea towels. But standing there, knowing what lies beneath the waves, I can't help wondering as to the fate of some of today's great coastal cities, perched as they are perilously close to the rising seas.





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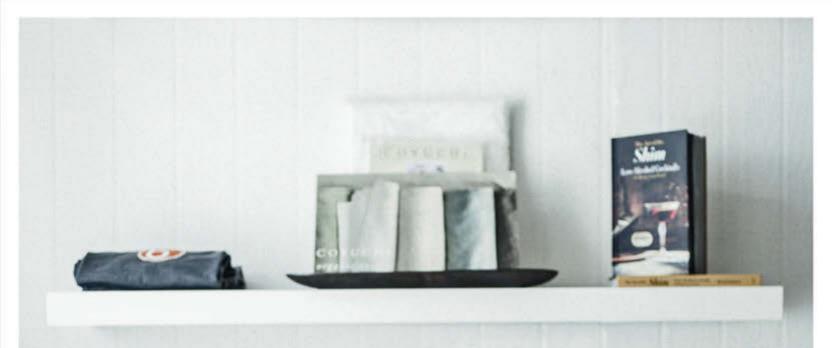
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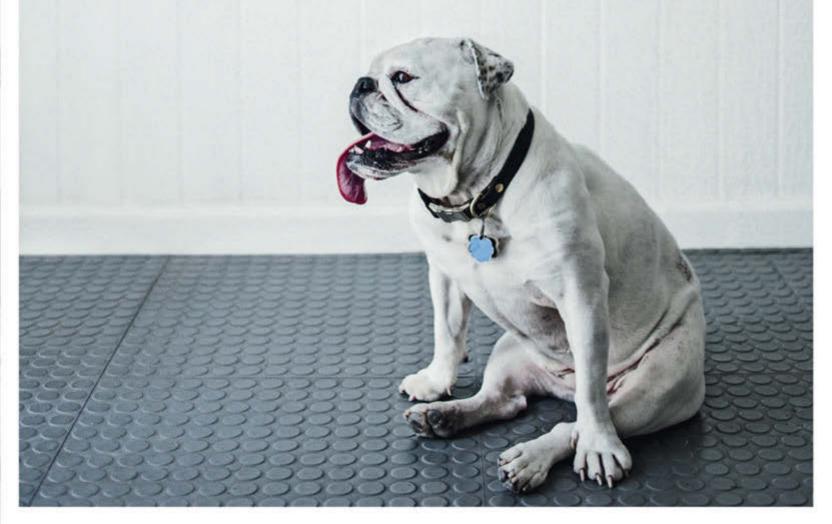




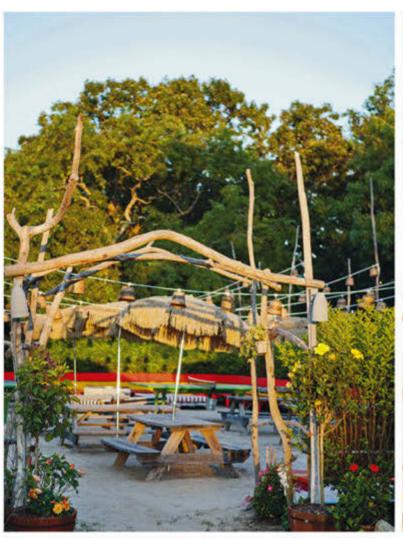
HOT DIGGITY DOG

America is the land of super-size-me brand names but look closely and you will find real independent characters that don't cost the earth – as comfortable as well-worn denim, as quirky as a Wes Anderson movie.

When it comes to old-school hotels, motels and holiday inns, these folks have got it licked











SURF AND TURF RUSCHMEYER'S, LONG ISLAND

This boho surf hangout fits in perfectly at Montauk, the laidback Long Island village that remains resolutely less flashy than its Hamptons neighbours. Originally built as a summer camp in the 1950s and re-imagined as 19-room hotel, it's tinged with more than a hint of nostalgia for those carefree days. There are no televisions in the simple, wood-cabin-style rooms with their hippie wicker bedsteads and white-clapboard walls, and everyone tends to hang out playing ping-pong, reading in hammocks or chatting at the picnic tables dotted around the central lawn, which has been christened The Magic Garden. Brunch is a lingering, lazy affair of Bloody Marys, scrambled eggs, berries and cream, banana pancakes and fresh-baked breads served up on long, communal tables in the restaurant or in the garden; in the evenings there are wood-fired pizza, micro-green salads and dripping lobster rolls. Over summer weekends this low-key charm gives way to a more charged scene as New York's beautiful people descend and the crowd spills out of the restaurant onto the lawn and across the parking lot to the sand-floored Electric Eel cocktail bar, where they groove away into the small hours. +1 631 668 2877; www.chelseahotels.com. Doubles from about £170







COLLECTOR'S DELIGHT

SALT HOUSE INN, MASSACHUSETTS

On arrival guests are handed a map of Provincetown, right at the northernmost top of Cape Cod, drawn up by owners David Bowd and Kevin O'Shea (Bowd was Ian Schrager's righthand man for years and O'Shea has a degree in interior architecture). Originally cottages built for salt-mine workers in the 1850s, this 15-room hotel is right where you want to be, on a quiet street off busy Commercial Street, and the map pinpoints off-thebeaten-track beach strolls, the best shops for vintage homeware and the couple's favourite restaurants (tables can be reserved before arrival). It's all about the details: from the Cape Cod-themed bric-a-brac (oars, fishing hooks, colonial-era pewter plates) found in antiques shops across New England, to the recycled vegetable oil soaps by LA brand Further. Everything is spot-on and impeccably designed. Breakfast - scones, frittata, quiche, ham and cheese croissants, and a yogurt station with granola and jam toppings - is a high point and can be taken in the garden or in a rocking chair on the second-floor sun-trap terrace overlooking the street below. The duo opened their second outpost here, Eben House, in May, in a former 18th-century sea captain's home - and are set to scatter the Salt brand around the USA and abroad. +1508 487 1911; www.salthouseinn.com. Doubles from about £110

MOUNTAIN HIDEOUT

HILLSIDE SCHOOLHOUSE, UPSTATE NEW YORK

This renovated, 19th-century schoolhouse is set deep in the Catskills, yet it's only two hours' drive from Manhattan. Owner Bronson Bigelow has done a brilliant job converting the classic clapboard structure, which includes a steeple, into a two-suite guesthouse, expertly riding the line between historic charm and contemporary cool. The enormous, open-plan ground floor is decked out with an eclectic mix of antiques and salvaged coffee tables, long chesterfields, a dining table with Tolix chairs and vintage bookends crafted by Bigelow himself (the latter are for sale, note the discreetly dangling price tags). Board games, a piano and a turntable with vinyl all tune in the old-school vibe (not to worry, there's an iPod dock, too). Upstairs, choose between the Belfry Suite - which affords a peek at the cast-iron school bell through a glass window in the ceiling - and Room 1893, named after the year the Schoolhouse was built. Spacious and light-filled, both have king beds, lovely views of the surrounding woods and white-on-white bathrooms that have been spruced up with stag-print wallpaper. There's no restaurant, so pick up provisions in Barryville, just a few miles away, and make use of the properly equipped kitchen in the original cloak room. Book both rooms and hole up with your gang. +1 845 557 8565; www. hillsideschoolhouse.com. Doubles from about £135





MARITIME CHARMER THE ATTWATER, RHODE ISLAND

It may be housed in an Italianate stucco building on the edge of Newport's historic district, but behind that Puritan simplicity there's a punchy mix of bright colours and graphic patterns, stripped wooden floors and plush beds piled high with pillows. Some of the 17 bedrooms are in the grey clapboard Urban Beach House next door where there's more of a jaunty nautical theme (driftwood walls, shades of blue) which references Newport's yachting traditions without whacking guests over the head with a spinnaker or slipknot. The little dining room (fresh pastries, bottomless urns of coffee) feels more like a Greenwich Village café than a New England B&B and the tapas-style breakfast is a real treat involving lots of small plates, including baked eggs, fruit cups and savoury scones. For afternoon tea there's oven-warm corn muffins with raspberry jam, homemade Oreos and decidedly fantastic sea-salt chocolate brownies. All the most important sights at Newport's colonial core are less than a 10-minute walk away, and a short, leafy bike ride down Bellevue Avenue will take you to the staggeringly opulent summer mansions of Gilded Age robber barons such as the Astors and the Vanderbilts. +1 401 846 7444; www.theattwater.com. Doubles from about £110

RETRO BEACH SHACK

POSTCARD INN ON THE BEACH, FLORIDA

This vast former 1950s motel in St Pete Beach is an ode to an easy-living era gone by. In the vaulted-ceilinged lobby there's a refurbished industrial fan and the day's surf conditions are handwritten on a chalkboard in case you want to harness your inner Kelly Slater. But before hitting the beach, grab a seat on one of the low turquoise loungers and thumb through the collection of art books, play a few games of ping-pong on the patio, and cram all your friends into the vintage photo booth. None of the 196 rooms are alike, but each shares a casual, come-as-you-are vibe (nab 362 or 364 for a balcony with a beach view). Instead of headboards there's a mural of a surfer inside a mammoth wave, a gallery of sepia-toned surfing snaps, or quotes from music greats such as Janis Joplin ('Don't compromise yourself, you are all you've got'), along with birch desks, metal drafting lamps and vintage light fixtures. Fuel up at the PCI Beach Bar and Snack Shack with a basket of fried jalapeños and a juicy burger washed down with a Florida Avenue ale. It's the area's oldest beach bar and, set between the pool and the talcum-soft sand that breaks the gentle roll of the waves, has by far the best seats in the house. +1 727 367 2711; www.postcardinn.com. Doubles from about £65













CAREFREE SUMMER CAMP WANDAWEGA, WISCONSIN

Owner David Hernandez, an advertising executive, used to visit this no-frills camp as a young boy, and he jumped at the chance to buy the 25-acre plot when it was sold off by a Catholic brotherhood 10 years ago. Sundaymorning mass is still held at the outdoor chapel. Hernandez and his partner Tereasa Surratt have kept things pretty rustic, with 25 simple rooms in a couple of lodges and little cabins, none with air-con and some with shared showers. What you really want to do is bag one of the teepees or a bed in the handcrafted treehouse with its stack of old leather suitcases in one corner and weather-worn skis in another. Surratt clearly has an eye for flea-market finds and there are quirky collections of vintage crockery and salt-and-pepper shakers on kitchen shelves in the main lodge and antique lanterns, thermos flasks and fishing lures in the laze-about Boy Scout tents made for idling through an afternoon. Lie in a hammock with a book; swing on a rope over Lake Wandawega; plan an evening cook-out (pick up supplies from the Elkhorn Piggly Wiggly). This place is all about simple pleasures. There's also an archery range, basketball and shuffleboard courts, an outhouse filled with boat equipment to borrow and a fishing pier for dangling bare feet on a hot summer's day. www.wandawega.com. A three-bedroom cabin costs from about £405 per night (minimum two-night stay)







SEASIDE SANCTUARY

THE TIDES BEACH CLUB, MAINE

This handsome, contemporary take on a Victorian mansion is just steps from the pearly white, three-mile stretch of Goose Rocks Beach in Kennebunkport, a real bonus on Maine's rocky coastline. Each of the 21 bedrooms has been done out in fresh blues and minty greens or sunny corals, with simple white wicker chairs or wingbacks. Altogether more zesty are the two rooms put together by famous New York ceramics and homeware designer Jonathan Adler, both with breezy, sea-facing balconies as well as navy or turquoise feature walls, bamboo chairs painted acid-green, and silver-and-blue bathrooms. In the evening, join fellow guests and locals for a Siren's Call cocktail on the white-painted rocking chairs scattered about the wraparound porch, and watch the sun set behind the emerald islands on the horizon. The TBC restaurant dishes up simple but seriously scrumptious New England comfort food (roast chicken; lobster in chive butter; seared shrimp; Maine scallops). Kennebunkport itself is a shingle-and-clapboard village with little boutiques, rickety lobster shacks and ice-cream parlours (Rococo's is the best). Rent a bike and peddle along the salt-tangy coastal paths, go kayaking or sign up for stand-up paddle boarding lessons on the lake-like water with fitness instructor Marcio. Guests also have access to the spa at sister hotel Hidden Pond. +1 855 632 3224; www.tidesbeachclubmaine.com. Doubles from about £140

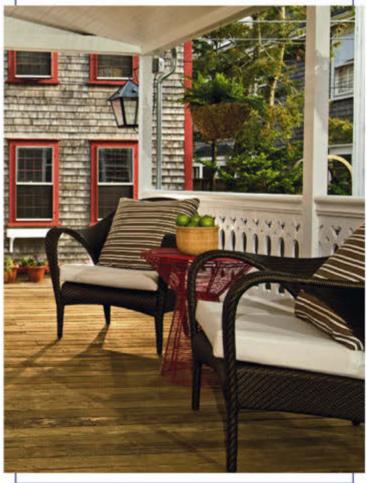
Reviews by: Jennifer Ceaser, Abbye Churchill, Steve Jermanok, Robert Landon, Meghan McEwen, Ann Marsh, Eileen Ogintz, Audrey St Clair, Emily Saladino, Sarah Stodola

CLASSY ISLAND B&B

CHAPMAN HOUSE, MASSACHUSETTS

Everywhere you look on Nantucket the cobbled streets are lined with weathered grey-shingle houses, and roses scramble over white picket fences in pillowy abundance.

This place opened three years ago - the newest and smartest addition to The Veranda House collection - in one of the prettiest buildings on the island, within easy walking distance of the ferry, Whaling Museum and all the top restaurants. The 11 bedrooms are grown-up chic (and no children under 10 are allowed); some have original fireplaces, retro floral curtains and whimsical needlepoint cushions on the beds, others have padded, teal-linen headboards and swirly-patterned rugs. Breakfasts of fresh, homemade muffins, scones and sweetbread are served in the charming courtyard and there are towels and umbrellas to borrow for a day on one of the island's long, windswept sandy beaches. Knowledgeable staff are happy to direct you to the best: Surfside for families, flying kites and beach games; Dionis, which is sheltered by sand dunes, for swimming in calm waters; Madaket for sunsets. Or pick up a packed lunch and head off on one of the island's cycle trails. Just make sure to be back in time for homemade chocolate-chip cookies and a late-afternoon glass of something sparkling. + 1 508 228 0695; www.theverandahouse.com. Doubles from about £115







HE FISH around here know how special they are. They shimmer and glow and sparkle like stars in their

know how special they are. They shimmer and glow and sparkle like stars in their own biopic, performing in the spotlight of crepuscular sunrays. There's the arresting electric-blue giti damselfish with its flash yellow tail, the alluring doe-eyed, deepreef cardinalfish, and the jamal's dottyback with aqua-rimmed eyes as startling as Daniel Craig's. Mandarinfish go about their flirty courtship dance at dusk – part tango, part samba – rising up, cheek-to-cheek, locked in a triumphant embrace of pectoral fins. And there's the shy Denise's pygmy seahorse hiding among gorgonian coral, a specimen so endearing you might just quit your job to study marine biology.

The Indonesian archipelago of Raja Ampat lies in the Coral Triangle, which stretches from The Phillippines to Timor to Papua New Guinea, known as the most biodiverse marine habitat on earth. There are many species here you won't find anywhere else. It has three-quarters of the world's coral varieties, 10 times that of the Caribbean. The high-definition visibility means that in one glance, without having to swim a stroke, you will see a multitude of corals resembling Murano vases or bunches of baby corn, marbled plumbing fittings, peanut brittle, cobwebs and an oversized cabbage patch.

Some say the scientist Alfred Russel Wallace, whose studies focused on these islands, should be considered Charles Darwin's equal for his work on the theory of evolution by natural selection. 'Situated upon the Equator, and bathed by the tepid water of the great tropical oceans, this region... teems with natural productions which are elsewhere unknown,' he wrote in 1869.

Raja Ampat is comprised of four big islands and hundreds of dots and specks

off the fragmented western corner of New Guinea, the world's second largest island. (Named in the 16th century by a Spaniard who thought the people here resembled those in Guinea, West Africa.) The eastern half of the island is given over to the independent state of Papua New Guinea; the western half belongs to Indonesia, evidently reluctantly, and is known as Papua. Locals are culturally Melanesian - more like Fijians than Javanese - and they're keen on independence. The morning I arrive in the province had been preceded by overnight political demonstrations. 'Drunks,' said one man, playing it down. 'There's a revolution going on,' said another, playing it up. The streets were crawling with Indonesian soldiers and military police. If you want edgy, this is it.

Yet this part of the world also serves as a reminder that there are still relatively unexplored places, serene and pristine. It has stayed this way because of the simple fact that for many years there was nowhere for travellers to stay. Committed divers, often the most pioneering of explorers, travelled around the region on liveaboard boats. But now homestays are opening up and word is beginning to spread.

Most visitors get to Raja Ampat by way of Sorong, a city on the far west coast of Papua, where there is an airport, army barracks and a karaoke bar called Happy Puppy. Life for many here revolves around the nation's three main sources of revenue: fishing, mining and logging, which also happen to be destroying the country's natural habitats. The port is busier than it should be for a far-flung provincial town. The gigantic arms of cranes unload shipping containers. Oil tankers fill up at oversized vats on the water's edge. Down the coast is the largest gold mine and the

third largest copper mine on the planet. They say that if Papua was an independent state, it would have one of the world's richest incomes per capita.

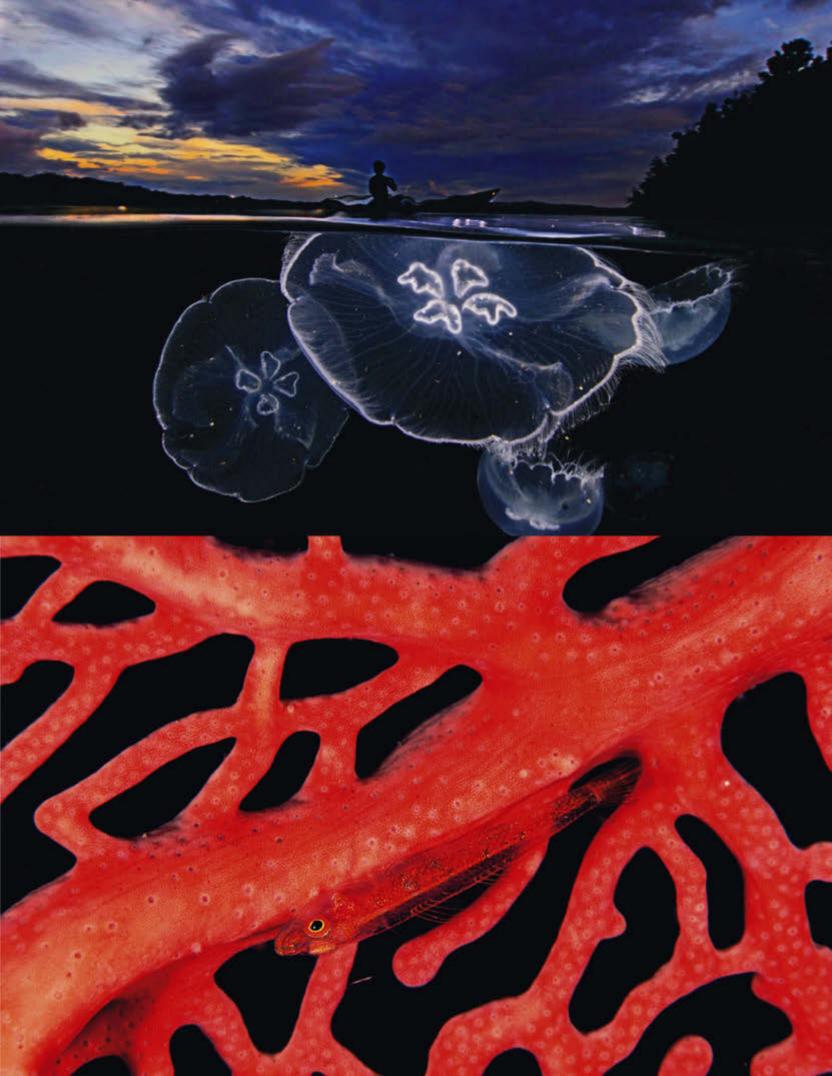
But Sorong does have a go-slow mode too. Kids walk to school across the airport runway. A column of smoke wisps out from between hillside homes where the call to prayer punctures the day. At night, 10-foothigh crucifixes light up in flashing neon.

Less than two hours from here by boat is a clutch of hotels and homestays, most of which have opened in the last few years. At Papua Paradise there are 16 overwater villas and two incredible house reefs, home to the fantastically named wobbegong sharks and flamboyant cuttlefish. I sit on my stilted deck and watch a family of radiah shelducks swim past, delivering intermittent quacks. A foot-long needlefish flies out of the water, avoiding a predator. A manta ray somersaults, cleaning its back, and the ripples of the splash extend to the shore. There is even a near-resident dugong (I had always thought they were imaginary beings, like unicorns).

Early mornings here are a cacophony of chuffing hornbills, crass squawks of black cockatoos and cackles of sea eagles. To me the place seems otherworldly – near mythical – and many people are aware of the need to future-proof their miraculous environment. But plans can get muddled. At Papua Paradise – currently all low-impact wood and thatch and bamboo – there are rumours of increasing the capacity of the hotel. I hear fellow guests muttering about the projected changes; that they won't be coming back.

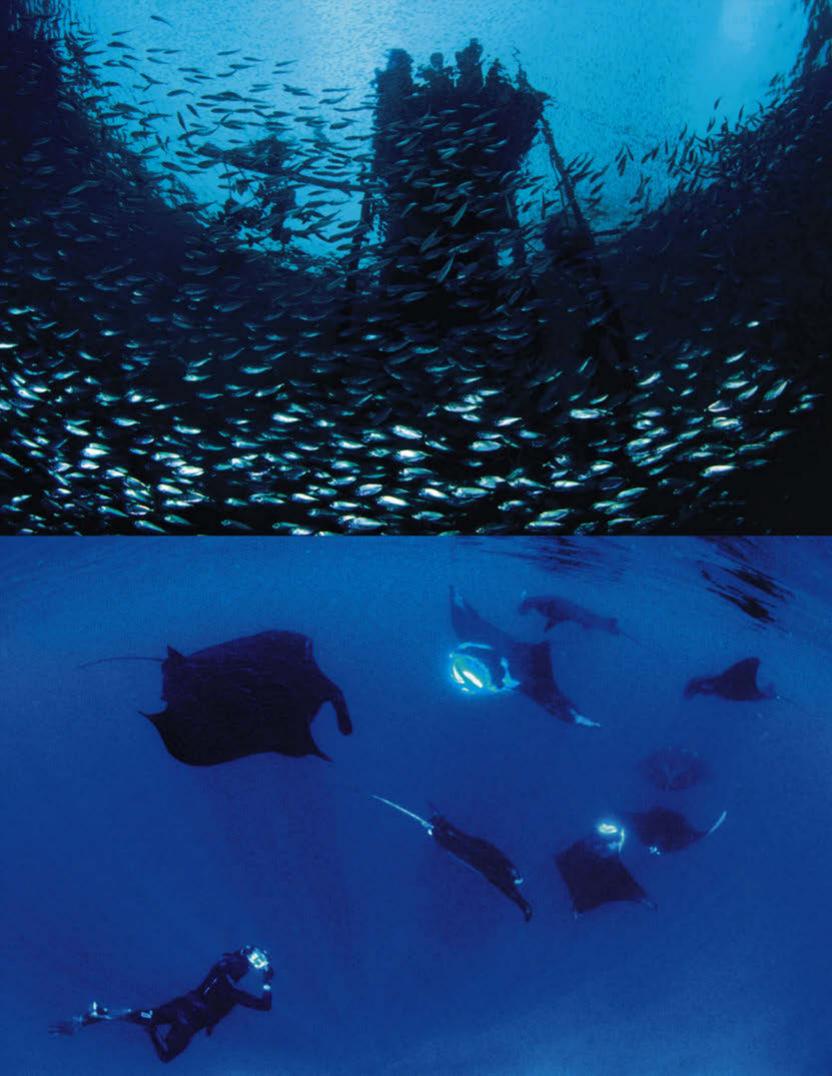
To discover why people really come here it is necessary to travel to the far reaches of southern Raja Ampat, to the island of Misool. I arrive by overnight ferry from

Opposite from top: a moon jellyfish under a boat, Raja Ampat; a goby fish on gorgonian coral. Previous pages, a fisherman above a school of baitfish









Sorong, a crowded, colourful vessel stuffed to the rafters with freight and large families (they sure know how to have babies here and, rather cleverly, babies who don't seem to cry). I spend most of the night on the bridge with the captain who chain-smokes and tells me in broken English that he hasn't had a ferry sink on him yet.

We motor between outcrops of towering rainforest, like someone has torn up the Amazon basin and thrown fragments into the Ceram Sea. The land rises up steep and high: sugarloaves of karstic limestone with streaks and striations and stalactites. Wave erosion has undercut the islands so they look as if they're levitating above the water. On the shore it's all cliffs and caves and mangroves, until suddenly, around a bay, there's a secret slip of a beach without a footprint in the sand. Flocks of birds rise up from the treetops in a series of whoops, only to settle again, gloating with satisfaction at their performance.

'I even had a bomb thrown on top of my group during one dive. And yet this was hands down the best diving I'd ever done. It's the Amazon of the world's reefs.'

The Miners secured the lease on a 425-square-kilometre patch of ocean and began to solicit local support for the creation of a no-take zone where all fishing would be banned. They hired a patrol team, set up ranger posts and began building a hotel on the site of an old shark-finning camp. When it came to opening, their construction staff changed clothes and became waiters. 'They had never even stepped inside a restaurant,' Marit says, 'and the housekeeping staff had never seen a Western bathroom.'

It seems those-in-the-know had been longing for somewhere like this in Raja Ampat: the divers came first, then intrepid couples, followed by families. The hotel is expanding, yes, but wisely, with four new villas and a spa. In Sorong, a café/shop is opening to help fund

no-take zone, which had increased the number of fish outside the protected area, and witnessed how foreign fishing boats were staying away. They also wanted jobs at the hotel and to benefit from its community projects. The Miners paid for the lease on a second section of ocean and the marine-protection zone doubled in size. 'We are now seeing shark-finning fishermen become rangers,' says Marit.

With the support of NGOs working in the region such as Conservation International, the Miners also petitioned local government for support; it has since made Raja Ampat a shark and manta ray sanctuary. This inspired a national declaration in 2014 to ban all fishing of manta rays, if not yet sharks, across Indonesia. 'You're guaranteed to see manta here,' Beale tells me. 'There are not many places on earth you can say that.'

For much of our world, there is an urgency to visit now before it's too late. But here at Misool, you could plan a trip with

This is hands down the best diving D've ever done: 9t's the Amazon of the world's reof,

At dawn the ferry docks near one of the world's biggest pearl farms where guests are collected for the final ride to Misool Eco Resort, a blow-you-away beautiful hotel constructed along strict eco-friendly lines. It puts some of the smartest spots in the Maldives to shame with its 15 overwater villas and cottages set around a scalloped bay built from driftwood and fallen trees. Calico drapes billow between hammocks slung beneath pitched thatched roofs, with wooden stairs leading down to the sea, and views of nearby islands so verdant, so vital, you feel they might rise up like Godzilla.

The hotel is the creation of Marit and Andrew Miners (she's Swedish-American, he's English) who, after seeing how the region's marine environment was being destroyed – by dynamite fishing, by nets, by long-line fishing, by chopping up turtles as bait for sharks – 'wanted to do more than talk about saving the world'.

'I was coming up from dives and there would be 30 fishing boats, all shark-finning,' Andrew says of the time when he was working on liveaboards in the region.

conservation work, and there are plans for a second restaurant, an aquaponics project and goat farm. But the Miners' overriding accomplishment is the impressive recovery of the environment. 'This is the only place in the world where marine biomass is increasing this rapidly,' says Calvin Beale, the hotel's marine biologist and dive instructor. 'The amount of fish on our house reef has doubled in six years.'

Impressed with the hotel's success, the Marits were approached by local villagers who had seen the spillover effect of the

Getting there

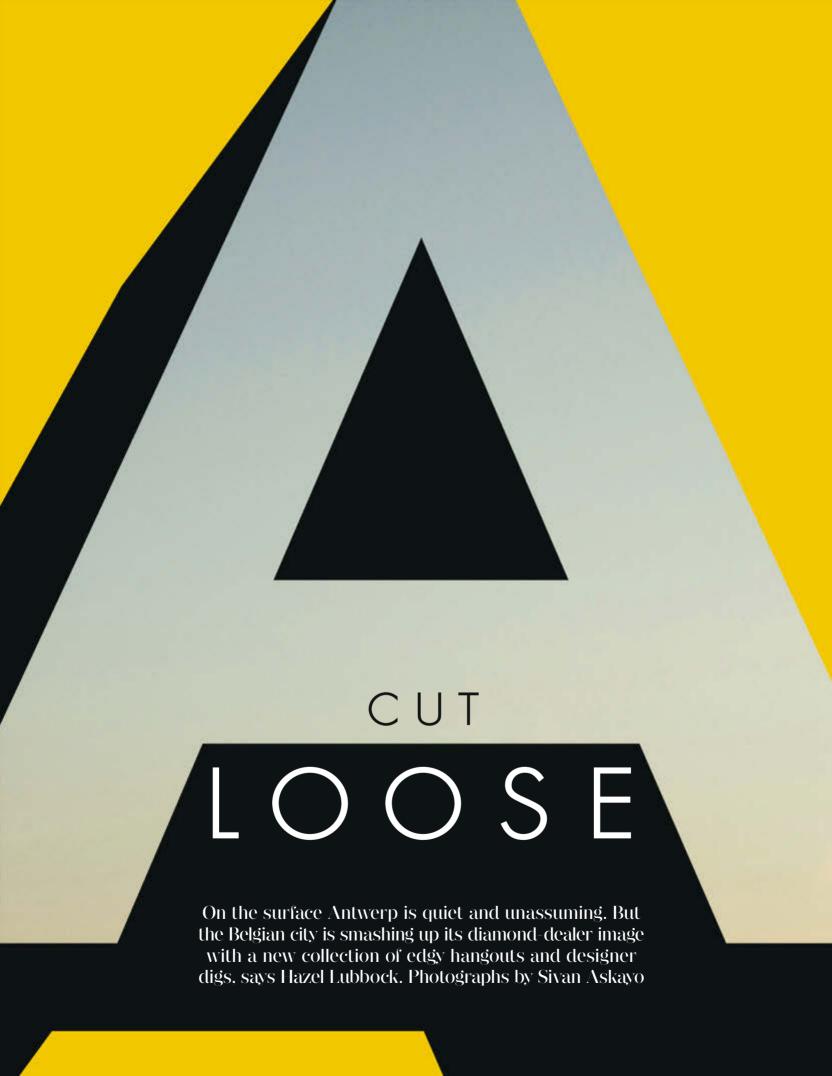
The Ultimate Travel Company (+44 20 3051 8098; www.theultimatetravelcompany. com) offers a 10-night trip, including a week at Misool Eco Resort full board, and one night at the Kemang Icon by Alila in Jakarta on the way out and The Fullerton in Singapore on the return, from £3,195, including transfers and Singapore Airlines flights from Heathrow.

your unborn grandchildren. This is one of those rare places where – enchantingly, inspiringly – it's set to get better and better.

On day trips to neighbouring islands it is rare to see another boat, let alone another traveller. I swim through a cave as big as a cathedral – with a Pantheon-like shaft of light – and exit by duck-diving under a rock into an aquamarine lagoon. I gaze upon 4,000-year-old petroglyphs of stencilled fish and handprints (missing a finger, cut off to mark the premature death of a loved one, a custom still practised today). I snorkel in a saltwater lake among hundreds of pulsating golden jellyfish; mesmerising, hypnotising, like floating in a lava lamp.

Best of all, I leap off my deck and into the sea several times a day to snorkel the house reef and fool myself into believing some of the fish have become friends: the cloud of flirtatious black-and-white damsels; the pair of loved-up coral rabbitfish; the clownfish hiding in the tentacles of an anemone. Now I know what to choose for my *Desert Island Discs* luxury: give me a mask and snorkel here and I'll be happy forever.

Opposite from top: a school of fish under a pier in the archipelago; photographer David Doubilet swimming with manta rays





s a fashion student in London in the 2000s I knew Antwerp to be an incubator of ideas. Until the 1980s, the port city's pattern-cutting block for design had been set by Mary Prijot, who headed up the new fashion department at its Royal Academy of Fine Arts in the 1960s. Her style was strict and uniform. Undergraduates studied classical costume and cut hemlines below the knee. Then something curious happened: a group of students who came to be known as the Antwerp Six rebelled and rewrote the rules. Drafting their own unique looks by taking an individual approach to design, the group, including Ann Demeulemeester, Dries Van Noten and Walter Van Beirendonck, altered the fabric of Antwerp forever.

Far from shop-lined Meir, the street that roughly connects the train station and cathedral, creatives continue to shape the city. When Van Noten moved his atelier to Het Eilandje, a desolate area adjacent to the red-light district around the docks, there was nothing but sex shops. And while some say the neighbourhood has been up-and-coming for several years, its regeneration is really only happening now. Modern-art galleries, multi-performance hubs (Het Bos is the buzzed-about new arrival), wine bars and a handful of brasseries have opened in old warehouses. The skyline has been transformed by the red sandstone Tetris-block Museum aan de Stroom (MAS), devoted to everything Antwerp, and the funnel-shaped Red Star Line Museum. To the north, Zaha Hadid's diamond-inspired building for the Port Authority is being polished up for its unveiling this year.

Nearby, on the edge of the River Scheldt, a giant curvaceous concrete caterpillar – a disused hangar for shipping containers – is the setting for the academy's graduate fashion show every

UNLIKE IN OTHER FASHION CITIES, PEOPLE DO NOT DRESS UP TO GO OUT. THEIRS IS A CLEAN, SOBER STYLE

June. Last year, Madeleine Coisne presented her Centers collection, for which she was granted the Mode Museum's annual MoMu Award for creative vision and technical ability. Inspired by the criss-cross tiles of Antwerp's railway arches, the collection incorporates geometric patterns with boxy Japanese shapes and rich colour in a range of textiles. The magpie in me covets her fellow student Raffaela Graspointner's exquisite leather work (laser-cut rainbow shapes, scalloped edges, sequin embroidery) and bold colour-blocking similar to David Hockney paintings. The shipping hangar is where concepts are realised, where careers begin. In summer, it becomes an urban beach club for a young crowd to let loose on the riverfront. Which couldn't be more fitting.

The infrastructure here makes it easy for ideas to evolve: you can reach most places on foot or bike around. London, Paris and Amsterdam are all little more than an hour away. But Antwerp is inexpensive, and that offers more opportunity for people to do innovative things. In the eastern 2060 area, among Turkish grocery shops and African hairdressers, is Atelier Solarshop, a concept store owned by Piëtro Celestina and fashion designer and academy graduate Jan-Jan Van Essche. The space started as a design studio before the pair began experimenting with various collaborations: art exhibitions, pop-up vintage-furniture shops and a Sunday breakfast club with food collective Otark Productions. Now it incorporates all these things, including pieces









from Van Essche's own menswear label. 'There are a lot of new initiatives happening outside of the mainstream and the city centre. For example, club night Noord Feesjes throws underground parties in existing venues in the area – a Polish disco or a Moroccan nightclub,' says Celestina. 'You get an interesting mix of regulars and young people out to discover new things.'

In a city where a bottle of beer costs less than a bottle of water, launching a cocktail bar may not seem like the most solid business plan. Undeterred, 24-year-old Didier Van den Broeck opened Dogma Cocktails in an unassuming street in the Old City. Jazz music crackles over conversations in Flemish, French and English, and worn leather sofas give it the feel of a 1920s sitting room. Some say Van den Broeck is crazy, mistaking his passion for madness. 'Rents here are low, so setting up a bar is easy,' he explains over the rattle of ice as he mixes two Cobra's Fangs for an interior designer and his model girlfriend sitting at the bar. 'It's persuading people to spend €10 or €15 on a cocktail they've never heard of that's tricky.'

He's not the only one to take a chance. Mixologist Alexander Jones and chef Michaël Timmermans are the duo behind pop-up gin bar Jones. The twentysomethings serve G&Ts with top-notch tonic water and garnishes of ginger, cracked peppercorns, samphire and edible flowers, paired with inventive sharing plates: foie gras with beetroot, elderberry and coffee; crab salad with citrus jelly and sorrel; panna cotta with lavender and marinated fennel. The pair are already scouting locations for their next bar-and-bites concept. Then there's Normo, a ramshackle micro-roastery and café with a handful of tables and brewing kit heaped haphazardly about. Students pile in bang on 11am to get their cold-brew caffeine fix, sharing tables with bemused bricklayers on their coffee break.

CONCEPT STORES CAME TO ANTWERP RECENTLY WHEN, BY COINCIDENCE, FIVE OPENED AT ONCE

A new generation of chefs are shaking up the restaurant scene too. In Berchem, the Jewish district, The Jane is habañero-hot stuff with a months-long waiting list to prove it. The old military chapel has been punked up by Piet Boon with a PSLab chandelier that looks like an upside-down sparkler, a giant neon Day of the Dead skull and tattooed glass windows depicting rams' heads, pulled teeth, roses and demons. The devil is in the detail too, with surprising elements to be discovered in every forkful. Plates become gardenbeds for Thai-style salmon tartare with deconstructed daffodils of courgette flower, mushroom stamen and basil leaves. There's a lively paella of squid, clams, piquillo and artichoke vinaigrette. The rhythm of the menu is slow and steady, with a dozen courses presented over several hours by waiters in G-Star pinnies, who shake your hand and pour Champagne over peach mousse, strawberries and granita for an apéritif. If this is the church of exceptional culinary art, then I'm here to worship 30-year-old chef Nick Bril and Sergio Herman, who closed his three-Michelin-starred Oud Sluis in the Netherlands to launch The Jane last year. It was no surprise that it received its own star within months of opening.

Unlike in other fashion cities, people do not dress up to go out here. Antwerpeners have a clean and sober style, more effortlessly confident than kooky. In rough-around-the-edges Bato Batu bar there is no sense of trying to stand out or, indeed, fit into the crowd. 'Being in Antwerp is like being in the home of a beloved

family member, where you can just be yourself,' says stylist Pholoso. 'There is no pressure to be somebody.' Her Stylebook blog champions emerging and established Belgian designers including Bruno Pieters, Dior creative director Raf Simons, Peter Pilotto, Christian Wijnants, Been by D'Heygere and Wanda Nylon. Taking one of her tips, I bag a pair of Ann Demeulemeester trousers for €100 at Labels Inc, a sort of high-end jumble-sale store which sources samples directly from designers. Among the treasure are heaps of AF Vandevorst, Raf Simons and Haider Ackermann; all monochrome tailoring and statement handbags.

Concept stores first really came to Antwerp in 2007, when, by coincidence, five opened within a few months of each other. My favourite, Graanmarkt 13, encompasses a fashion and lifestyle shop, restaurant and art gallery, with an apartment to rent above. Designed in the pared-back style of Belgian architect Vincent Van Duysen, each floor of the townhouse has cool concrete surfaces, cleverly concealed spaces-within-spaces and chalky accents. It's impossible to see Graanmarkt 13 as anything other than one entity. Guests in the apartment eat from the same ceramic dishes as diners in the restaurant. You can buy the fabulous Michaël Verheyden chair in the master bedroom. Paintings by a rotation of little-known artists hang in the gallery and on the shop walls.

Architecture and art in Antwerp are as entwined now as they were when Flanders produced the Flemish masters in the 15th century. 'Antwerp is built from creativity – thinkers, craftsmen – with literal waterways and walkways from another era of grandeur,' says local fashion journalist Kristopher Arden-Houser.

Today's artists may not be as well known as Rubens, but the scene is spirited. Axel Vervoordt's gallery in the Oude Koornmarkt is a good place to start for the modern major players. Belgium's most influential collector, he has been the art world's name to know since the 1960s. He and his sons are currently developing Kanaal, an ambitious project to form a new district alongside the Albert Canal, just outside the city. Old warehouses and a chapel on the former distillery site will be transformed, and new homes added in Cube blocks. At its heart will be the Vervoordt Foundation Museum, housing an enormous collection of works. For contemporary art, the Tim Van Laere Gallery has a lively mix of names, including post-feminist painter Kati Heck and visual artist Nicolas Provost. Ingrid Deuss's gallery showcases photographers such as Isabel Miquel Arques, whose book *Portret met garnaalkroket* celebrates the scene with portraits of Belgian artists.

Most evenings, Graanmarkt 13's basement restaurant is filled with the chatter of artists, actors and designers. 'People don't care that Dries Van Noten might be eating at the next table,' says owner Ilse Cornelissens. 'It's always nice to see someone famous, but not really something people make a big thing out of.' Antwerpeners are by nature modest. Theirs is not a skyscraper city, always on the move. It's calm. There's space to grow, develop – and with that creativity can be fostered.

SHAPE SHIFTERS

Antwerp was put on the fashion map when a group of six students shunned the traditional silhouettes favoured by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. Mavericks **Ann Demeulemeester**, **Dries Van Noten**,

Walter Van Beirendonck (now head of the school's fashion department), Dirk Bikkembergs, Marina Yee and Dirk Van Saene changed the way Belgian fashion was perceived when they showed their avant-garde collections at London fashion week in 1986. They opened up the scene for smaller cities and less recognised schools previously snubbed by the established fashion capitals.







THE CITY'S TOP 10 VISIONARIES

CENTURIES OF RADICAL THINKERS HAVE MADE THIS SMALL PLACE BIG ON CREATIVITY

ABRAHAM ORTELIUS

Thought to be bonkers at the time, the 16th-century cartographer was the first to imagine that the continents had once been joined. His *Theatre of the World*, a collection of beautiful maps, is considered the earliest atlas.

PETER PAUL RUBENS

Chubby naked women, tigers, exotic fruit and silks: Rubens' paintings are rich in colour and subject, depicting scenes of excess. His baroque masterpieces, seen in buildings such as the Cathedral of our Lady, have influenced artists from Thomas Gainsborough to Jenny Saville.

ANTHONY VAN DYCK

You could say that the selfie trend started in the 1600s with van Dyck, best known for his portraits, including those of himself and Charles I. He became court painter to the English royal family after studying under Rubens.

EUGEEN VAN MIEGHEM

Thrown out of Antwerp's academy for being too 'free' with his subject, the 19th-century artist joined an anarchist group. It was no bad thing:

he went on to become one of the city's most recognised painters for his studies of the docks. See his work at the Red Star Line Museum.

LINDA LOPPA

Antwerp's ModeMuseum (MoMu) was conceived by Loppa, who taught the Antwerp Six, giving them the freedom to experiment and ultimately helping to launch their careers.

MoMu still raises the profiles of Belgian designers with exciting exhibitions, including an annual display of graduate collections.

LUC TUYMANS

Figurative painting was given a new energy in the 1980s when Tuymans was instrumental in reinventing the genre, introducing new form and techniques. He captures horror and history in a way that is both provocative and challenging.

RAF SIMONS

Encouraged by Loppa, Simons is a self-taught designer who swapped a career in furniture design for menswear and has reinvented Dior since John Galliano's departure. He still runs his own label from his Antwerp studio.

PETER DE POTTER

For his Angelic Starts work, the digital artist downloaded homoerotic pictures posted on random Facebook profiles, added handwritten words such as 'Refusal' and 'Monogamy' and published them on Tumblr. If anything will make you think twice about putting pictures of yourself online, it's knowing that de Potter could find them and use them as part of his next series.

DEVON HALFNIGHT LEFLUFY

Opening Ceremony ordered Halfnight LeFlufy's first collection before he had even graduated. His recent True Believer collection has a brilliantly chaotic narrative, with references to hip-hop, California, escapism and experimentation with trippy colours.

MANON KUNDIG

The technical skill in Kündig's theatrical menswear is astonishing. Her S/S 2014 collection was almost fetish-like, with collages of Google images on acid-printed silks wrapped around the models' entire bodies, even their faces. The otherworldly figures were like *Doctor Who* baddies with Red Riding Hood scarves.

WHERE TO STAY

Ilse Cornelissens and husband Tim Van Geloven opened **The Apartment** last summer. The sunny terrace feels Mediterranean and the interiors are distinctly Scandi-slick. www. graanmarkt13.be. From £935 per night, sleeps six

More bed and coffee than anything else, **Room National** is perfectly placed for shopping on
Nationalestraat. The room to book is all-white
01, designed by sisters Vera and Violetta Pepa.
www.roomnational.be. Doubles from about £100

Contemporary boutique **Hotel Julien** has a busy bar, small spa and fantastic views of the cathedral from the roof terrace. www. hotel-julien.com. Doubles from about £130

WHERE TO EAT & DRINK

Chef Seppe Nobel makes simple dishes with honey from **Graanmarkt 13**'s rooftop beehives and vegetables from the kitchen garden. www.graanmarkt13.be. About £55 for two

Eye-catching interiors and superb cooking make **The Jane** the hottest table in town. www.thejaneantwerp.com. About £85 for two

Hip bakery **Konditori** supplies The Apartment (see Where to Stay) with Paris-quality croissants, homemade bread and cloud-light custard-cream pastries. www.konditori.be

Two-Michelin-starred **t'Zilte** at the top of the MAS serves some of the most sophisticated food in town. www.tzilte.be. About £170 for two

Sint-Felix Pakhuis was one of the first new-wave restaurants to open in Het Eilandje. www.felixpakhuis.nu. About £55 for two

Manuel Wouters, who learnt his trade on the *QEII*, mixes award-winning classic cocktails (Mai Tai, Bellini) at **SIPS**. www.sips-cocktails.com

Roastery, shop and café **Normo** serves dripfilter coffee and cold brews to those who take their beans seriously. www.normocoffee.be

Korsakov Café is the kind of place where you might see a local model hanging out because her mate's band is playing. korsakovcafe.tumblr.com

Head to **Dogma Cocktails** for cracking tiki-bar concoctions. www.dogmacocktails.be

WHERE TO SHOP

At **Graanmarkt 13** buy ceramics and glassware from the restaurant and The Apartment. Fashion, too: Christopher Wijnants is a favourite label. www.graanmarkt13.be

Find preloved designer pieces for a fraction of the original price at **Labels Inc**. Like a secondhand store, only better. www.labelsinc.be At **Houben** there's a tight edit of designers including Christopher Kane, Céline, Thom Browne and Simone Rocha. www.houbenstore.be

Loft Styles looks like a film-props warehouse with industrial lights, chesterfields, model planes, mannequins and battered trunks. www.loftstyles.eu

Ingenious blooms by Mark Colle fill **Baltimore Bloemen**; he does exciting things with
flowers for Raf Simons, Dior and Viktor & Rolf.

www.baltimorebloemen.be

Academy graduates Karin Hendrix and Katrin Wouters have an eponymous shop, **Wouters & Hendrix**, where they make fashion-forward jewellery with unusual chicken-feet clasps and jagged edges. www.wouters-hendrix.com

Interior-design studio **Helder** spills into a shop for sleek lamps, handmade jewellery and tongue-in-cheek embroidered badges.

www.studiohelder.be

Magazyn is the place to go to pick up design objects for your home in copper, glass and leather. www.magazyn.be

The Recollection is packed with modernlifestyle essentials: Maison Martin Margiela homeware, art books, Aesop products. www.therecollection.com





FANCY PANTS

PLAY PEEKABOO WITH A FRISKY FIFTIES LOOK IN PIN-UP-WORTHY SWIMWEAR. STYLED BY FIONA LINTOTT. PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD PHIBBS



Above, Daisy bra, £30, For Love & Lemons (www.forloveandlemons.com). Woven shorts, £250, Zimmerman (www.saltresortwear.com).

Alliance yellow-gold split bracelets, from £1,262; Alliance yellow-gold large split ring, £891, all Maison Margiela Fine Jewellery (www.doverstreetmarket.com). Opposite, Zanzibar yellow swimsuit, £180, Prism (www.prismlondon.com). Wood-and-resin bangle, £200, Marni (www.marni.com). Cape leather bag, £745; satin heeled sandals, £430, both Tod's (www.tods.com).

Previous pages, from left: acetate cat-eye sunglasses, £150, House of Holland (www.houseofholland.co.uk). Bel Air bikini, £186, Melissa

Odabash (www.odabash.com). Patterned swimsuit, £245, Escada Sport (www.escada.com). Wicker clutch bag, £330, Kate Spade (www.katespade. co.uk). Perspex rings, £28 each, Maria Princesa (www.mariaprincesa.com). Foster suede sandals, £890, Chloé (www.chloe.com)







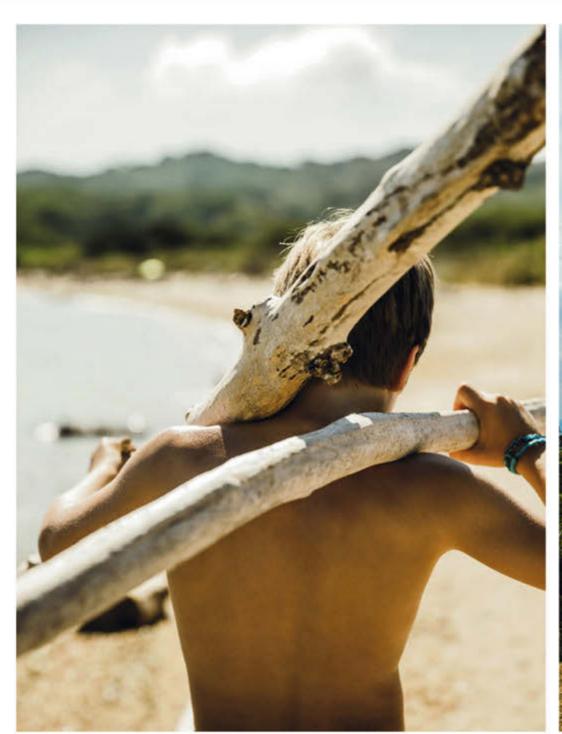
Above, Bandeau Barbell swimsuit, £250, **Proenza Schouler** (www.proenzaschouler.com). Affian sandals, £570, **Manolo Blahnik** (www. liberty.co.uk). Opposite, Tripping swimsuit, £175, **Bower** (www.avenue32.com). Majory cotton shorts, £370, **Kate Spade** (www.katespade.co.uk). Flora cuffs, £78 each, **Maria Princesa** (www.mariaprincesa.com)





Above, Rainbow swimsuit, £190, Fifi Chachnil (www.fifichachnil.com). Dreya denim espadrilles, £250, Jimmy Choo (www.jimmychoo.com). Alliance yellow-gold large split bracelet, £2,747, Maison Margiela Fine Jewellery (www.doverstreetmarket.com). Opposite, Pacific jumpsuit, £135, For Love & Lemons (www.forloveandlemons.com). Abstract-print bikini (worn underneath), £132, Proenza Schouler (www.proenzaschouler.com)

Hair, **Paul Merritt** at De Facto, using Kérastase. Make-up, **Ruth Warrior** at Lovely Management, using Chanel. Model, **Kate Lynne Bock** at Elite Management New York. With thanks to **Uxua Casa Hotel** (www.uxua.com) in Trancoso, Brazil, which has doubles from about £300





HUSH

Beyond the flash of the Côte d'Azur are a twinkle of salty island starlets that no





HUSH

paparazzi have snapped. By E Jane Dickson. Photographs by Martin Morrell





SPINDRIFT

falls like meteors on Porquerolles. Spinning spheres of sea spray burst high in the fierce blue sky and fizz on upturned faces. It feels magical, like a snow fight in summer.

Les Iles d'Or – Porquerolles, Port-Cros and Ile du Levant, or simply Le Levant – lie just 20 minutes by boat off the Côte d'Azur. The mistral, rushing down the Rhône valley to the Mediterranean, has its last hurrah here. It's not called 'the idiot wind' for nothing; bent double and forced to a trot by the 40mph gust at your back, it's hard not to laugh.

Here on Porquerolles' western tip, the pine canopy is windswept to a straggly green quiff, in keeping, as it were, with the island's retro vibe. This is the South of France as sung by Jacques Brel, unstyled and unspoiled. If St-Tropez is Bardot in a bikini, Porquerolles is Jeanne Moreau in a fisherman's jumper and espadrilles. Charms are deliberately low-key, as if it had learned from the Riviera the perils of trying too hard.

The croissant-shaped island is just three kilometres by seven: small enough to explore by foot or bike, but big enough to find solitude and, if you discount the urgent pulsing of the cicadas, silence. Private cars are banned on Porquerolles and there is no public transport. The best way to get around is by cycling and hire shops are plentiful. It should, however, be noted that the *Jules et Jim* fantasy takes you only so far on extravagantly rutted dirt roads. Best, when choosing your wheels, to go for the BMX option and don't even think about a tandem – unless you're hell-bent on divorce.

Island life centres on the Place d'Armes, a vast square shaded and scented by columns of eucalyptus. The trees were planted as a precaution against cholera in the Napoleonic era when the island was a military garrison. Since then it has been turned over to a soda factory and a penal colony for children (there is a reason why French kids have such lovely table manners). The pristine landscape and *douceur de vivre* enjoyed today is almost entirely attributable to a Belgian gold prospector, FJ Fournier, who bought Porquerolles in the early 1900s on impulse for his new wife. In 1971, just as Fournier's descendants were on the point of selling to Club Med, the state stepped in and declared 80 per cent of the island a national park.

Today the Place d'Armes is a convivial, buzzing space where doves take dust baths and children turn cartwheels in a blur of brown limbs and Breton stripes. As shadows lengthen and the ferry carries off the last of the day-trippers, the square reverts to its imperturbable rhythm. On broad café verandahs, *l'apéro* turns into dinner and dinner stretches to *un petit digestif* – the island-made mandarin liqueur, sharp, unsticky and full of vitamins, does the job nicely. The sudden ceasing of the cicadas is filled by the click-clank of *pétanque* – the game is an obsession here – and visitors are

Above, at the bar at Le Manoir de Port-Cros.
Opposite, Le Mas du Langoustier. Previous pages from left: beachcombing on La Plage Blanche du Langoustier; La Plage Notre Dame, one of the island's secluded beaches; Le Manoir de Port-Cros







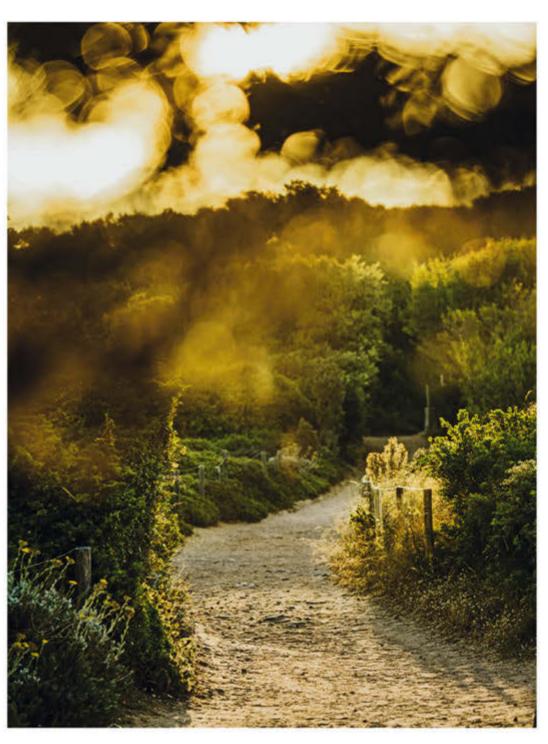
invited to consider the binary principle of boules: do you aim for the jack, or do you smash your opponent out of play? As the vitamins kick in, the question assumes existential significance.

Places to stay on Porquerolles are limited and the position of Le Mas du Langoustier, the farthest point from the village, adds to its privileged sense of isolation (a hotel bus picks you up at the dock and runs an hourly shuttle service into the village). Built by the widowed Madame Fournier in the 1930s, with harmonious modern additions, Le Mas is a low ochre pile arranged around a courtyard, where the scent of lavender blends with pine and sea-salt breezes (Jo Malone take note).

Here the patina of age and personality is scrupulously preserved; fans of five-star luxury may prefer more attention to finish for their money, but Le Mas fits perfectly with Porquerolles's genteel horror of showing off. Rooms are decorated rather than 'done' with Colefax-y curtains and cushions. Sweetly amateurish watercolour paintings and old family portraits make a welcome change from lifeless corporate art. Pink marble bathrooms with matching pink towels and bathrobes (marvellously flattering to the complexion) are scarcely state-of-the-art, but as you lie like Barbara Cartland in rose-tinted bubbles, you're not minded to miss the rainforest showerhead. It's a little like being the house guest of a great-aunt who breakfasts in Dior but believes that too much mod-connery thins the blood. The same hearty philosophy applies at the poolside (no chilled-towels or ice-bucket nonsense here).







A short walk down a sandy track from the house and enclosed by high hedges, this is not a pool for posing. Dress code is more Speedo than *le string* and kids splash and shriek to their hearts' content. Mums stretched out with novels on their faces send dads to organise swimming races (with generous handicaps for competitors in water wings) and giggly girls give marks for the boys' underwater handstands. Like a small, immaculate Sisyphus, a toddler in a Petit Bateau playsuit pushes a toy bus ever and again up a grassy bank. Unlike Sisyphus he is hugely amused each time it rolls back and has to sit down to laugh harder.

For those who prefer swimming *au grand large*, Langoustier has two exceptional beaches (not private, but in practice it's only hotel guests who make it this far off the beaten track). The cove on the south side of the peninsula has sunbeds on fine black sand. The more exposed, north-facing strand (La Plage Blanche) is a white-on-white installation of fantastically sculpted driftwood and banks of wind-dried sea grass fluttering like prayer flags.

The discreet charm of Le Mas du Langoustier extends to its restaurants. La Pinéde, a shady terrace cased by speculative magpies, is perfect for relaxed family meals; a long table, with grandfather in a lobster bib at one end and baby beating his spoon at the other, is an 'ages of man' *tableau vivant*. L'Olivier, with its Michelin star and pastel mural of Riviera idylls, is a more formal

Clockwise from far left: rue de la Ferme near the village square, Porquerolles; view from the ferry from La Tour Fondue; pebbles on La Plage Noir du Langoustier; path to the beach from Le Mas du Langoustier; lobster at Le Manoir; La Plage Notre Dame



Above, Place d'Armes, Porquerolles. Opposite, clockwise from top left: room 4 at Le Manoir de Port-Cros; view from Fort Sainte Agathe of Plage de la Courtade; Chemin des Oliviers, Porquerolles; dining room at Le Manoir; La Plage Blanche du Langoustier; sea bass and creamy sea urchin with shiitake mushrooms at Le Mas du Langoustier's L'Olivier restaurant; Le Manoir's Mini Moke; the hotel's restaurant. Centre, Le Mas du Langoustier

affair; chartered helicopters from Nice and Monaco chunter through blue twilight to drop off devotees of Joël Guillet and Julien Le Goff's modern Mediterranean food from the mainland for supper. The domed dishes and lobster-pink napery are a quaint throwback to 1970s fine dining, but if there are occasional Fawlty Towers flourishes in the service ('I present to you... the butter!') the tasting menu is flawless. Seven courses, from a crisp, lacquered croustillant de langoustine with ginger and caramel to sea bass flecked with pistachio foam, truffled beef and a show-stopping pudding with 'strawberry caviar' (this is party food for fairies), are expertly judged and paced. The wine list has its flashy, Alan Whicker moments (Château Petrus at about £4,000), but there's also a strong showing of local vins de Provence. Our shell-pink rosé from the nearby Domaine de la Presqu'île de Giens has surprising heft; if one of the Alice-banded girls around us were to hoick up her skirt and show extravagant tattoos, we could not be more delighted.

Waking up on Porquerolles, there are two clear options: to tootle or not to tootle. A sizeable proportion of residents at Le Mas never stir from its lovely precincts, but this would be a shame, for Porquerolles packs a lot of topography into a small area. Strike uphill from the village to the 16th-century Fort Sainte Agathe for a lordly vista of the domesticated interior - orchards of rare orange, lemon and mandarin varieties belonging to the Conservatoire Botanique Nationale and scaled down vineyards (the charming owners of Domaine Perzinsky welcome walkers looking to buy just one bottle

for a picnic). Or explore the spectacular clefts and creeks of the island's rocky fringe (Les Calangues) by bike or by sea kayak; even at the height of the summer season you can find a two-person beach with unbroken Mediterranean views where you can think yourself a castaway (and be home in time for tea).

Representation of the contract men with goatees (the third Ile d'Or on the circuit, Le Levant, is a long-established nudist colony) takes you to the smaller and more rugged island of Port-Cros. Disembarking on the sandy quayside

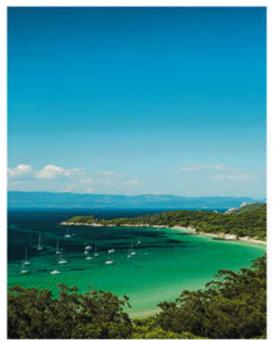
with its scatter of beach bars and row of royal palms, this could be the Caribbean.

Walk just five minutes along a coastal path and you'll reach the green garden gate of Le Manoir de Port-Cros, a colonial-style mansion with a unique literary heritage. Since the 1920s when Jean Paulhan, celebrated editor of La Nouvelle Revue Française, struck up a friendship with Marcel and Marceline Henry who owned Le Manoir hotel (and, for that matter, the island), Port-Cros has attracted respected writers seeking refuge from the stresses of 'the continent'. André Gide, André Malraux and Paul Valéry were regular visitors to Le Manoir and would find little changed today. Public parts are pretty as a picture; antique furnishings and huge vases of garden flowers are set to advantage against whitewashed walls, while the garden with its dappled shade and great splashes of oleander is like a scene painted by Manet. Bedrooms are simple to the point of asceticism: there is no air-con and limited hot water, but mine had a private terracotta terrace – the perfect spot to stretch out with a novel.

Guests, almost exclusively French, are apt to congratulate one another on the lack of TV and Wi-Fi (there is a public screen switched on, we are assured, for coverage of general elections). The real

Waking up on the island, there are two clear options: to tootle or not to tootle

























luxury here, by general and oft-repeated consensus, is peace and quiet. The atmosphere of the library extends to the gated pool area where reading is practically a competitive sport (Derrida trumps all). There's a vaguely collegiate feel to mealtimes too; diners are summoned by bells for food more correct than inspired, but conversation flourishes long into the night. Children appear at the table and in the games room (parents ensure draughts doesn't become too boisterous) but Le Manoir is essentially a grown-up retreat.

Opposite, private terraces at Le Mas du Langoustier, Porquerolles

Like Porquerolles, Port-Cros and its surrounding waters is an energetically protected conservation area: its hilly trails, shaded by live oaks, are impassable by car or bike and cigarettes are banned beyond the quayside to minimise the risk of forest fires. Discovery walks can be arranged with park rangers and my guide, Vincent, was excellent company, showing me how to calm jellyfish stings with hot stones and leaping indefatigably into ditches in search of the elusive discoglossidae, a shy and very rare amphibian, much like a toad. The most spectacular sights, however, are found beneath the waves. A clearly marked underwater trail, with panels explaining maritime flora and fauna, can be followed by snorkellers off the popular beach of La Palud and scuba excursions are easy to arrange. Out in the posidonia beds – great silvery savannahs of flat-bladed sea grass – rainbow wrasse flicker and glint while doleful groupers look on disapprovingly, like plain girls at a disco.

Although privileged seclusion is the point of Les Iles d'Or, it would be a pity not to check out the neighbouring mainland Hyères. Camping Les Palmiers, 15 minutes from the ferry port at La Tour Fondue, was the original Riviera resort, pre-dating Nice and Cannes and beloved by pioneering Francophiles, including Edith Wharton, Leo Tolstoy and Robert Louis Stevenson. It remains hugely popular with French holidaymakers, who flock each summer to the extensive campsites on its borders, but is little-known by foreign visitors. The lovely bones of this old beauty are still apparent in the medieval town and Belle Epoque boulevards, and Robert Mallet-Stevens' Villa Noailles, where surrealists partied with socialites, is a modernist masterpiece. There are excellent grazing opportunities for foodies in Hyères: Pâtisserie Dominique is a destination chocolatier, and the anchoïade, tapenades and *pastis artisanal* at Cave Massillon elevate the apéritif to an art form. Pascal Bonamy, chef and owner of La Colombe neighbourhood restaurant, which draws critics from Paris, offers cooking lessons on Saturday mornings; I'm not sure I perfected *risotto à la bourride*, but I did learn to chop onions at warp speed in the farmhouse kitchen at La Bastide du Plantier, where Brigitte Martin runs a chic and welcoming B&B.

Back down on the Giens Peninsula, with its dramatic cliffs and coves, an appealing beach restaurant, Le Pradeau Plage, presents itself at exactly the right turning of the coastal path to make stopping for a late lunch seem a sensible plan, which turns out to be a stroke of genius. Time passes and light fades. By pudding, I fear I'm quoting Baudelaire calling up his 'fair isle of green myrtle filled with full-blown flowers'.

Out in the thickening blue, sparse lamps glimmer on Porquerolles, our own lovely island sleeping demurely in the dark. It's not only bright lights that beckon.

GETTING THERE Fly direct to Touloun-Hyères airport with Cityjet from London City and with Flybe from Bournemouth. **Le Mas du Langoustier**, Porquerolles (+33 4 94 58 30 09; www.langoustier. com; doubles from about £155). **Le Manoir du Port-Cros**, Port-Cros (+33 4 94 05 90 52; www.hotel-lemanoirportcros.com; open from April to October; doubles from about £125)



HOTOGRAPH: LINDA BROWNLEE/CORBI

RAY WINSTONE

He was expelled from drama school but this Cockney hard man – star of Sexy Beast and The Gunman – has a cuddly side and once played a beaver in The Chronicles of Narnia

Where have you just come back from?

Sicily. I've got a lot of friends out there so I go quite often for a little chill out. It's a fabulous island. You get a lot of sun, which you need now and then to buck you up a bit, and then when it rains, you eat, drink and relax with the locals.

Where have you felt happiest?

At home [Essex], although when I was in Australia and New Zealand the people were so much like us it made me realise that it's not always about the place.

Name a place that most lived up to the hype

The Maldives is paradise and I think the Amalfi Coast is stunning. I also went to a place called Winton in the Australian outback, which is sort of like a cowboy town. It rained for the first time in five years when I was there and the next morning the plants had grown about three foot and the whole place was mauve. It was incredible.

What's your favourite city, and why? London. We know how to light it now and we've got great food from every part of the world. The only thing that needs sorting out is getting around.

Which is your road most travelled?

My wife doesn't like a car trip, so she'll fly to Sicily, but me and my mate drive with our kids and we go through France into Switzerland and stay there, then down the Amalfi Coast and stop for a night, then down to Calabria. I drove to the Cannes Film Festival years ago and found a place in the mountains called La Bonne Etape in Château-Arnoux Saint-Aubane, which was recommended in one of those Relais [& Châteaux] books I nicked from a hotel once. The food was out this world.

Describe your favourite view

Standing on top of Whistler in Canada with a drink watching the city light up. Or when I was filming *The Proposition* in Australia, I was sitting by the pool at a motel and there was a rainbow around the sun. And when shooting *Point Break*, standing at the bottom of Angel Falls in Venezuela... I've been a lucky boy.

What do you pack first?

My wife says to me, 'Raymond, just take your shorts and a T-shirt'. But I still have

to pack a suit; you never know when you might need a nice whistle.

Describe a memory from a childhood holiday

We never used to go abroad but we would go to Snowdonia. Me and my dad walked up Snowdon, which is quite a trek – I couldn't do it now – and we rode horses through the mountains.

Where did you go on your first holiday without your parents?

My nan and granddad took us to Mallorca when I was about 11. You know what it's like with grandparents: they give you a little bit of leeway, whereas mum and dad keep you right firmly planted.

Describe a holiday disaster

In the West Indies, we got on a small plane and my mate lent against the door

'I MET A SHAMAN IN VENEZUELA. HIS FEATHERS WERE CLARET AND BLUE, WEST HAM COLOURS'

when we were above the sea and it opened! Luckily he was strapped in, but his body kind of went out and we had to pull him back. It was telling us what to expect of the rest of the holiday...

Tell us about a great little place you know

There's a small hotel in Cianciana, Sicily, called Villa Platani. It's in an old monastery up in the mountains and it's a blinding little place to stay.

Which is the smartest hotel you've ever stayed in?

I like the little ones now because you get to feel like one of the family rather than having to be on your best behaviour all the time, which is very difficult for me. Saying that, my mate Bobby [Robert] Carlyle got married in Skibo Castle and that was fantastic – proper Scotland.

Sightseeing or sun lounger?

As I've got older I like sitting down, as long as the bar's close. I've actually started reading books, or listening to them if I'm

feeling really lazy. I also find that if you have a couple of sunbeds before you go away, you stop yourself burning and come back looking like a local.

'I lost my heart in ...'

Torquay, where I met my wife.

Who is the most interesting person you've met on your travels?

Last year I met a shaman in Venezuela. His feathers were claret and blue, which are the West Ham colours, and he liked whisky. We conversed, I don't know how seeing as I was talking Cockney and he was talking Venezuelan Indian, but we somehow understood one another and we just rabbited on. It was obviously the whisky... But I always end up in places where the locals hang out and I enjoy that: even if the language is different you find your way.

Which foreign phrase do you use most often?

Dov'è il bagno, which is 'where's the bathroom' in Italian. You've got to jump up and down when you ask it.

What's your quilty pleasure?

Oh you'll get me arrested, you will. I don't think I'd feel guilty about anything if it was a pleasure. I suppose my grubby pleasure is that I do love a kebab when I've had a drink the night before. If you reheat it at home it gets all nice and crunchy.

What would you most like to find in your minibar?

Chocolate. Trouble is, once I start that's me done and I always feel a bit rough after.

Most regrettable holiday souvenir?

My wife thinks you go on holiday to shop and bring everybody home a present. No, we're not on holiday to do any of that bollocks. I'm there to chill.

Nominate your eighth wonder of the world

The rock formation in my garden.

How do you relax?

Doing nothing. It's lovely just to sit down and watch *Tipping Point* or something like that. Turn the phones off and don't answer the door like you don't exist for an hour.

Ray Winstone was talking to Francesca Babb. He stars in 'The Trials of Jimmy Rose' on ITV later this summer





IN BRITAIN

rossing the Solent it's impossible not to shift down a gear into full-on holiday mode. The boat ride from the mainland achieves a sort of time-travel confidence trick impossible to conjure in easier-to-reach places. Lord Tennyson described the air here as 'worth sixpence a pint'. The coast is a study in blue and green and the water can segue from dazzling turquoise to slate-grey in the passing of one morning. Inland, cattle and sheep graze in jade fields sheltered by giant oaks; winding roads edged with hedgerows and wild grasses evoke Enid Blyton adventures. Hiring your own wheels is by far the best way to explore, and since the phone signal is notoriously patchy, it's also a good idea to brush up on old-school map-reading

skills. Despite the wholesome nostalgia, there's also a mini food revolution happening, reflected in a gentrified locavore spirit. So savour the tearooms and fresh crab sandwiches, then loosen your belt to dig into a few audacious dishes from a new wave of creative chefs: this summer Robert Thompson, once the youngest chef to win a Michelin star, opens his own restaurant at the very heart of the island.

WHERE TO STAY

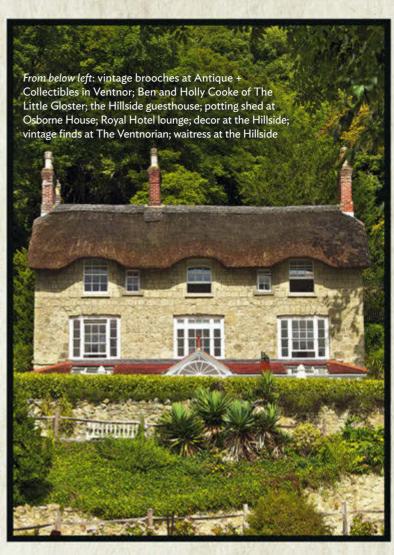
KING OF THE HILL

Danish owner Gert Bach has carefully restored and converted a thatched

Georgian villa into the **Hillside**, a 12-room guesthouse and restaurant with a fresh, Scandinavian look. It's all about simplicity, elegance and quality: freshly pressed linens, pure-wool carpets, Vi-Sprung beds, beautifully crafted Danish furniture. Many of the ingredients served at breakfast and supper in the restaurant (and at Bistro, its chic Pier Street sister) are grown in the back garden. Ask about the provenance of the honey, beer or even whisky and you'll hear tales of unrivalled integrity. The only snag is that supper is served at 7pm on the dot (Bach runs a







tight ship – it's his way or the B3055). Ventnor (+44 1983 852271; www. hillsideventnor.co.uk). Doubles from £130

ROLL WITH IT

Photographer and stylist Helen and Frazer Cunningham have made a name for themselves with **Vintage Vacation**'s quirky collection of Airstream caravans, and their signature schtick includes colourful crochet blankets, Formicatopped cabinets and car-boot knick-knacks. The couple launched their business with a 1965 Tradewind and 1962 Safari, and have since added the tiny Shack near Cowes, Mission, a four-bedroom tin tabernacle, and Scout, a converted hall that sleeps eight. +44 7802 758113; www.vintage vacations.co.uk.Two-night stays from £100

WEIGH ANCHOR

A favourite with the yachting set, the 17-room **George** is the Solent-side king of the postage-stamp-sized town of Yarmouth, with its 16th-century castle and 17th-century church. There's a safe but excellent menu at the Conservatory brasserie (sirloin steaks, catch of the day) but the real draw is its lawn, bordered by ancient walls and overlooking the pier and ferries

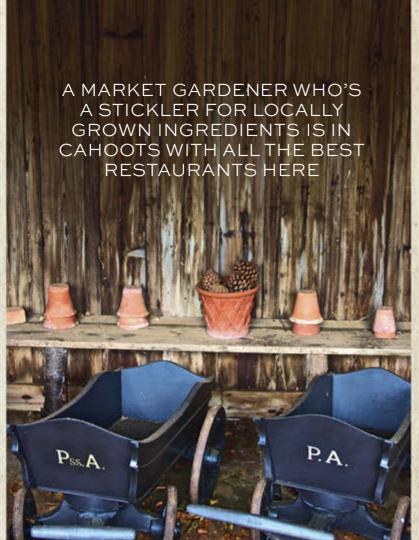
sailing in and out. For smarter food, chef Dan Inniss-Fitzhugh cooks a mean poached lemon sole with squid-ink cannelloni at the hotel's recently refreshed Isla's. Yarmouth (+44 1983 760331; www. thegeorge.co.uk). Doubles from £195

TILL THE COWS COME HOME

For comfort camping on a working dairy farm with wood-burning stoves, fresh linens and proper flushing loos, Tom's Eco Lodge has five tents, each of which sleeps eight (you can take over the whole camp for a party of up to 40). Suck up views over fields to Freshwater Bay from your hammock while the little ones tear around the farm, make new friends by the barbecue, campfire or pizza oven - or while picking up just-laid eggs from the hen house. There's also a manor house, a couple of farm cottages and new log cabins to rent. Tapnell Farm, nr Yarmouth (+44 7717 666346; www.tomsecolodge.com). From £350 for four nights

THE FULL DANISH

At The Little Gloster, a waterside restaurant-with-rooms, the Scandinavian touches (house-cured gravadlax, gherkins with the sirloin burgers) are a nod to chef-









owner Ben Cooke's Danish grandmother. He keeps a close eye on every detail, along with his wife Holly, and the bedrooms are nautical-fresh with a whiff of the Hamptons. Picnic benches and deckchairs on the lawn are an enchanting setting for foodie and music events. As with most of the best restaurants here, Cooke is in cahoots with market gardener Will Steward, a stickler for locally grown ingredients, and the results (garlic-butter baked cod fillet with capers, beetroot and chickpea fritters) are sublime. Gurnard (+44 1983 200299; www.thelittlegloster. com). Doubles from £110

WHERE TO EAT & DRINK

LOCAL HERO

Chef Robert Thompson thought the island lacked somewhere unpretentious,

with great food and a cool vibe, and with that in mind he's opening his first solo venture in Newport, the capital. Joined by Simon Ulph, his sous chef at The Hambrough and The George hotels, Thompson's – set to open this summer – will showcase local producers on his Modern British menu. Expect rock samphire and asparagus, of course, but also steamed prawn wontons with cucumber

kimchi, and his ever-popular smoked-eel terrine. Now Thompson is his own boss, some of his signature dishes will be served as small plates in the bar rather than part of a four-course extravaganza. Newport (www.robertthompson.co.uk)

DOWN THE PUB

The Taverners' swagger comes from the size of its portions, use of local ingredients, homemade everything and great service. The unashamedly un-PC jokes above the washroom sinks hint at chef-owner Roger Serjent's sense of humour and his sprawling menu includes classics like shepherd's pie and sausages-and-mash as well as specials including Bembridge crab Scotch eggs with chilli sauce. There's a vegetable garden out back next to the pétanque strip and kids' climbing frame, and a gift shop stocked with local cheeses and crafts. Godshill (+44 1983 840707; www. thetavernersgodshill.co.uk)

REGAL SPLENDOUR

An aperitif on the lawn or sea-view terrace is a civilised start to any evening at **The Royal Hotel**, near Ventnor's Botanical Gardens; and its Appuldurcombe restaurant (named after the nearby stately home) is a class act: the Gallybagger cheese soufflé with caramelised cauliflower purée is a firm favourite, as is the seafood risotto with local lobster, chervil, tomato and langoustine bisque. Ventnor (+44 1983 852186; www.royalhoteliow.co.uk)

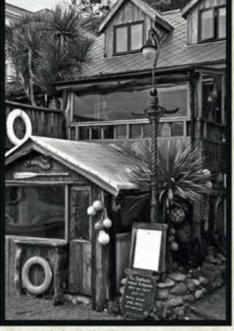
NAME THAT TUNE

The **Piano Café** used to be a shop owned by Queen Victoria's piano tuner, then a post office frequented by the poet Tennyson. These days it's a completely delightful contemporary place for breakfast (terrific bacon sandwiches), nibbles (biltong, pâte) and burgers as well as cakes and speciality teas. You'll find it opposite St Agnes, one of the UK's last remaining thatched churches, just along from the 150-year-old Orchard Brothers grocers. *Freshwater* (+44 1983 472874; www.thepianocafe.co.uk)

FAT OF THE LAND

The unpasteurised full-fat milk from **Briddlesford Lodge Farm** tastes as rich and delicious as ice cream, and the farm shop is a great place to stock up on it as well as other star produce such as sweet tomatoes and tangy Garlic Farm pickles. The butcher also makes sensational





From left: fried whitebait on tartare sauce at the Hillside Bistro; The Boathouse restaurant in Ventnor; the Piano Café at Freshwater

Osborne House, himself, now beautifully

fawn to a deep black. Staff at this stud farm happily snap visitors keen to be seen with these beautiful creatures – especially Chinese ones, who believe they resemble a mythological beast called the Grass Mud Horse. Wellow (+44 1983 760900; www. westwightalpacas.co.uk). Walks from £12

➤ kebabs for a barbecue. Rock up for breakfast, brunch or lunch at the farm's Bluebells Café (free-range eggs; salads with an Asian twist; hearty sandwiches; first-rate veal) then pop into the museum to find out more about farming life on the island. Wootton Bridge (+44 1983 884650; www.briddlesfordlodgefarm.co.uk)

STAVE OFF VAMPIRES

Like chocolate? Love beer? Adore garlic? These unlikely companions all get together at **Garlic Farm Café**. Farm owner Colin Boswell is inordinately proud of producing no fewer than 12 garlic varieties, and rightly so. He has helped build up an island super-brand from the fragrant bulbs – and his family's part in the island's history is celebrated in the Heritage Centre. *Newchurch* (+44 1983 865378; www.thegarlicfarm.co.uk)

GONE CRABBING

Locals are quick to point out that the duck-egg-blue clapboard shack of **Seapot** was once a public loo on the coastal path between Ventnor Pier and Bonchurch. But it has grandstand views of sparkling Wheeler's Bay; and owner Kerry O'Reilley's homemade cakes are superb, as are the soups and crab sandwiches made by her brother, James. They even have 50p doggy bags for canine companions. Wheeler's Bay (+44 1983 857787; www. facebook.com/seapotcafe)

WHAT TO SEE & DO

VICTORIANA

Inspired by the Italian architecture of the time, Prince Albert designed

much of Queen Victoria's seaside retreat,

maintained by English Heritage. It's an edifying destination for the whole clan: wander through its gardens, eat at the excellent Terrace restaurant, then relax on HRH's private beach and admire her modesty-preserving bathing machine. A shuttle bus connects the house with Swiss Cottage, where many royal children honed their gardening and domestic-management skills. A cone from the Fifties-style Minghella ice-cream parlour is always a winner on a hot day. East Cowes (+44 1983 200022; www.english-heritage.org.uk)

BRANCH OUT

Responsible Tourism award-winner **Goodleaf Tree Climbing** has cleverly harnessed the old oak trees in Appley Park for tree-climbing adventures under the direction of brilliant guides. Paul McCathie's dulcet Kiwi tones will soothe any potential nerves; his wife Abi's choc-chip flapjacks help bolster the energy levels. *Ryde* (+44 333 8001188; www.goodleaf.co.uk)

BESIDE THE SEASIDE

Collapse in a deckchair and watch the tide gently ebb and flow as families and young folk flit about the beach-hut-flanked shore at **Steephill Cove** in Ventnor. Book ahead for a table at The Boathouse for a seafood lunch (the lobster is great) or pause for crab pasties at the Crab Shed. www.steephillcove-isleofwight.co.uk

STRANGE BEASTS

For a trek over Tennyson Downs with some soft-fleeced South Americans, you need **West Wight Alpacas**. Fun fact: they come in 22 shades, from white through

DINOSAUR HUNTING

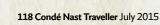
There are rich pickings for amateur palaeontologists on the island's beaches; for inspiration, remind your crew that five-year-old Daisy Morris discovered the remains of a pterosaur on the west coast in 2009, and it's now on display in London's Natural History Museum, named after her. Sign up for a walk and let a professional geologist guide you to fossilised wood and rocky treasures. www. visitisleofwight.co.uk/dinosaur-island

CLEAR THE COBWEBS

Follow the chalk path along the island's west coast to the **Old Battery**, past heather, gorse, wildflowers and rare orchids. The 20-minute walk from Alum Bay can be wind-whipped, but it's worth it knowing that an impressive coastal lookout awaits, along with a cream tea. The 150-year-old defence tower overlooks the chalk stacks and across to Hampshire and beyond. *Alum Bay* (+44 1983 754772; www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

SOUND CHECK

Along with the Isle of Wight Festival (11–14 June) and Bestival (10–13 September), there's also the Isle of Wight Festival of the Sea (22 June–5 July) and the Literary Festival (15–18 October). Visit www.visitisleofwight.co.uk





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URBAN ESCAPE

Stressed in the city? Town taking its toll? Get blissed-out and body beautiful this month with the Summer of Wellness at COMO Shambhala Urban Escape at Metropolitan by COMO, London. CNT readers can enjoy 20% off any of their fabulous rejuvenating 60-minute treatments and feel tip-top again. To make your booking call 0207 447 5750 and quote 'CNT Summer'. Subject to availability. Valid from 1 July 2015 - 1 January 2016. Terms and conditions apply.



OPEN-AIR THEATRE OCCASION

This month check out a sparkling new adaptation of timeless classic The Seagull at the Regent's Park Open Air Theatre (19 Jun – 11 July). For an unforgettable evening of theatre beneath the stars, celebrate summer with this special champagne ticket offer just £32.50 – including a complimentary glass of Canard Duchêne champagne! (Tickets normally £48.50). To book, call 0871 297 0777 or visit www.seetickets.com/tour/the-seagull using the promo code CONDE NAST. Subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply.

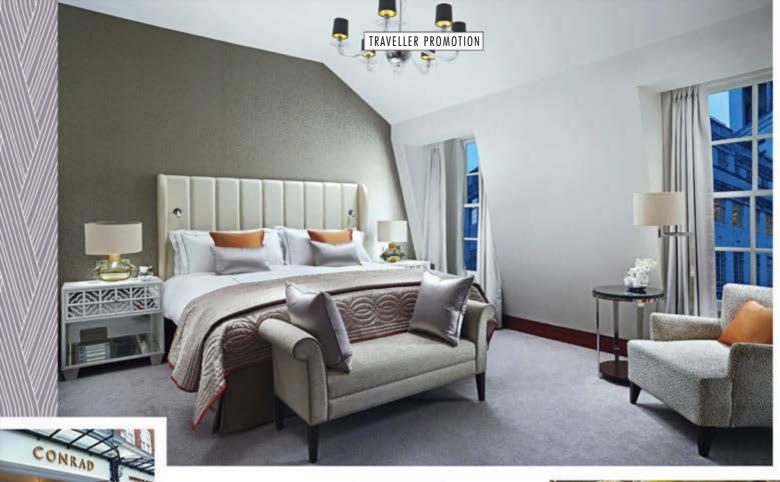


SPIRIT OF RIO

Bringing CNT readers the spirit and style of Rio de Janeiro and reflecting the city's effortless, cool 'carioca' way of life, Frescobol Carioca is gearing up for summer. For the perfect beach accessory, make sure you grab one of their leblon beach bat sets and add an orange neoprene case that you will get for free using code "CNT2015". Valid from 01/06/15-31/07/15. Visit www.frescobolcarioca.com using code "CNTbeachbats". Subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply.



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LONDON calling

Rebranded, upgraded and totally up to date, Conrad London St. James in the heart of Westminster is a slick, contemporary retreat for the chic 21st-century traveller

Lucked away behind an elegant 19th-century facade in London's royal and political heartland, this sophisticated boutique beauty is just moments away from Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, world-class shopping and St. James's Park, not to mention the distinctive chimes of Big Ben. The building, steeped in history, is a Westminster stalwart – even the specially commissioned art has a political flavour.

Inside it's intimate and individual with Britishness at its core. Locals in the know love the Blue Boar restaurant, and flock to savour its seasonal British food with a

modern twist, where farm-sourced meats and the freshest seafood from Devon and Cornwall are served up to smart guests and well-heeled locals alike. Indeed, it's not unusual to find yourselves rubbing shoulders with the great and the good of Westminster, all looked after by the attentive, discreet team who really do think of everything.

Speaking of service, not only are the friendly staff at your beck and call, thanks to the 'Conrad Concierge App' you can arrange everything you need – theatre tickets, the best seats in the Blue Boar Bar, or even just skipping check-in – at the touch of a button.



Clockwise from top: The Conrad Suite bedroom; St. James's 'Glorious Garden' afternoon tea; The Conrad Suite bathroom; Conrad London St. James facade



Compliments of Conrad

Book the Compliments of Conrad Package (for a minimum 2-night stay) and receive a £100 hotel credit. Book by 31.12.15. Offer valid from 01.06.15 to 31.12.15. To book, call 020 3301 8080 or visit conradhotels.com/london
Subject to availability. Terms & Conditions apply.

Dining here is a delight and to celebrate spring, the hotel's superb pastry chefs have been hard at work creating the St James's Glorious Garden afternoon tea. Chocolate bees and icing butterflies accompany melt-in-the-mouth macaroons and all manner of sweet treats. What more could you ask for? Welcome to Conrad London St. James.

For further information call 020 3301 8080 or visit conradhotels.com/london

THE EXPERTS

This month's Insider to know The world's best city spas Advice

EDITED BY FIONA KERR & STEVE KING







THE SIAM, BANGKOK

After an 11-hour flight many folk want to head straight to the Chao Phraya, the river at the heart of Bangkok, so that the water can work its calming magic. That's why everyone loves the Mandarin Oriental, with its left-bank location. But the new city sensation is The Siam, further upstream. Designed by Bill Bensley, the suites are slick - white walls and dark wood floors, fans overhead, antiques everywhere - and the Opium Spa is bathed in flickering candles (only chemical-free Sodashi products are used here). Peel off your travel clothes, slip into the shower, dress in loose cotton PJs and surrender to an hour of

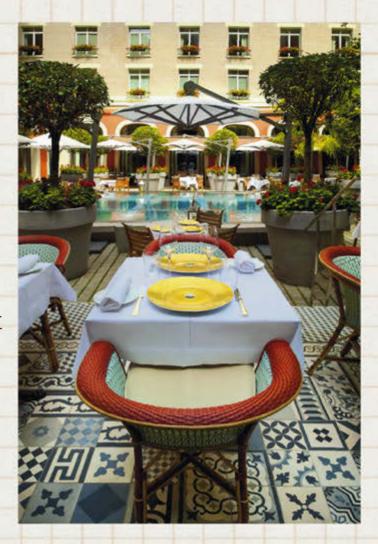
Thai massage, which stretches, turns and twists the arms, back and legs – it's like having yoga done with someone else coordinating the moves. At the end of a session you feel wonderfully reassembled and will sleep like a rock. Wake up to birdsong and breakfast (croissants, mango, tiny pots of blackcurrant yogurt) on the terrace; then it's just a 20-minute ride on the hotel's sleek canvas-topped longtail boat to the Grand Palace and the reclining Buddha at Wat Po. BOOK IT Cleveland Collection (+44 20 3111 0805; www.clevelandcollection.co.uk) offers two nights from £1,235 per person including breakfast, flights and transfers

LE ROYAL MONCEAU PARIS

For those who associate a holiday in France with refined-carbs bloat, this is where to eat the healthiest breakfast in Paris. Every food craze is catered for. There's an alternative milk bar with eight types including rice, almond and coconut. There are organic omelettes with chia seeds. There is every kind of bread you can think of, plus a signature, vitamin-boosting granola. And the team at the hotel's Clarins Spa has helped create a detox salad at Le Bar Long, packed with superfoods including quinoa berries, aloe-vera cubes and kale (eat it outside in the summer, in the bar's pretty, geranium-covered courtyard). The spa itself is a labyrinthine world of white, floaty muslin curtains, with the largest swimming pool (23 metres) of any Parisian hotel. On the menu are My Blend by Clarins treatments, using potions that can be customised

THERE'S EVEN AN ALTERNATIVE MILK BAR WITH RICE, ALMOND AND COCONUT ON THE MENU

to solve specific skincare problems, and a brilliant stress-relieving yin-yoga class. This soothing subterranean den makes the perfect antidote to the busy streets above – and even to the rest of the hotel, which rocks a colourful, bonkers-chic look. Re-designed by Philippe Starck in 2010, the rooms are smart and playful. Take your kids: they'll love the 3D cinema and Saturday brunch workshop, and you'll leave on a buzzy health high. BOOK IT +33 1 42 99 88 77; www.raffles.com/paris. Doubles from around £722



METROPOLITAN BY COMO, MIAMI



A sharp new addition to the South Beach scene, COMO's first American outpost is a sensitively reconstructed 1930s hotel with angular lines and a dazzlingly white exterior. Sit on the restaurant's sun-drenched terrace for breakfast and tuck into homemade dried fruit, nut and seed granola with vanilla-and-coconut yogurt (all menus have been designed to balance blood-sugar levels and boost energy), or take to a sunbed and sip a cold-pressed juice. The same health awareness continues in the airy, eighth-floor spa, where the signature massage draws on a variety of techniques to lull you into a state of utter relaxation. Or try the COMO Shambhala Sun Soother for frazzled skin, where a full-body compress is followed by a lavish application of body oil containing apricot kernel, monoi flower and coconut oil. Between the swayingpalm-lined boardwalk and beach is a Hockney-blue swimming pool, great for a few lazy laps. In the evening, the rooftop hydrotherapy pool has show-stopping views over the seemingly endless sand, as the setting sun streaks the city's skyscrapers pink and gold. BOOK IT The Discover COMO Shambhala package starts from about £265 per person per night. American Airlines (www.aa.com) flies from London to Miami







THE GREENWICH HOTEL NEW YORK

This Tribeca hub showcases plenty of international influences: Moroccan tiles, Tibetan silk rugs, an Italian restaurant, a drawing room in the style of an English gentleman's club. The new penthouse TriBeCa Suite (pictured), designed by Axel Veervoordt, references Japanese wabi-sabi; in the basement is the Shibui spa. Book in for a shiatsu massage (fully clothed, no oils) and you'll be presented with a neat parcel of fisherman's trousers and a tunic top to change into. The treatment takes place on a navy-and-white patterned mattress and involves acupressure, lots of assisted stretching and breathing techniques. The therapists might be tiny but they are seriously strong, rocking backwards and forwards, pulling arms and legs in all kinds of directions before signalling the end of the session by banging a gong against a traditional copper Tibetan singing bowl. The result is looser, jelly-like limbs and a sense of feeling reinvigorated. Afterwards, sit on a low teak chair by the lantern-lit pool and sip matcha tea under birdcage-shaped lights and a reconstructed wood-and-bamboo roof that once formed part of a 250-year-old farmhouse in Kyoto. BOOK IT +1 212 941 8900; www.thegreenwichhotel.com. Doubles from about £390



THE LEELA PALACE NEW DELHI

If you're on your way to Vana, India's spa of the moment, or some other remote Himalayan spot, you're not going to be able to do the entire journey in one. Delhi is an essential stopover for much of India (not least because of its shopping opportunities). Just 25 minutes from the airport, this hotel is so civilised, sleek and well-run that guests might well leave the next day wondering if it was a dream: those great expanses of pale marble; that garden restaurant, surrounded by glass

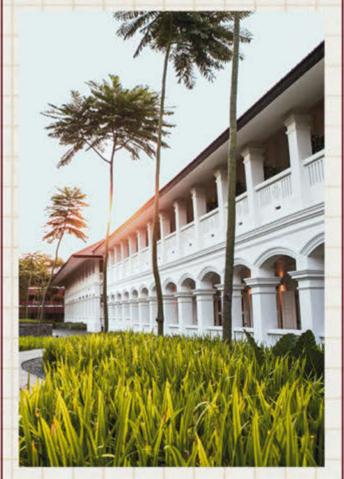
THE NORTH INDIAN STAFF DELIVER SUCH A RELENTLESSLY RHYTHMIC MASSAGE IT'S HARD NOTTO FALL HALF-ASLEEP

walls, with its scrumptious lassis, pastries and rice puddings. And then there's the exquisite, lofty-ceilinged spa by ESPA, which is dimly lit, creamily pale and scented by lemon-grass. The northern Indian and Tibetan female therapists deliver such a firmly, relentlessly rhythmic massage that it's a tough job not to succumb to half-sleep. After re-emerging, don't leave without ordering tea and a squiggly-iced cake in the extravagant Edwardian lobby lounge or overlooking the towering golden Devi statue in the garden, a spiritual sanctuary in the best Indian tradition.

BOOK IT +8000 261111; www.theleela.com. Doubles from £105

CAPELLA SINGAPORE

Set on the island of Sentosa, this lush paradise planet is straight out of a sci-fi movie. Colonial heritage buildings fuse with sleek lines and swooping architecture by Sir Norman Foster, all marvellously in sync with the natural habitat; the three infinity pools, each on a different level, have outstanding views of the South China Sea. It's a proper retreat from the hub of the city. The astronomically-themed Auriga Spa is named after the constellation in which Capella is the brightest star. One series of treatments is designed to complement different phases of the moon cycle. It all sounds rather curious, until you realise you have accidentally visited while the moon is waxing. Typical. Instead, plump for a sublime Senja Sunyi massage, delivered using a fragrant rose and pomegranate body balm. The long, flowing strokes with heated 'moon' stones smooth out any muscle kinks, trapped nerves or tangled circadian rhythms. And take a dip in the Japanese onsen-style vitality pool, which is tingingly refreshing. BOOK IT Cleveland Collection (+44 20 7843 3531; www.clevelandcollection.co.uk) offers three nights from £1,359 per person sharing, including flights, transfers and breakfast



PHOTOGRAPH: MICHEL FIGUET



in to AFRICA

Discover Africa's golden triangle with the SunLux Collection, three five-starhotels that steal the location limelight



or a truly unforgettable journey, the SunLux Collection links elegant Cape Town with the remote bushveld of Pilanesburg National Park via the natural wonder of the Victoria Falls – a combination that creates a once-in-a-lifetime African adventure.

The journey starts at Cape Town's iconic Table Bay Hotel. Opened by Nelson Mandela in 1997, it remains top of the city's location list for its direct access onto the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront. While the stunning views look out to Table Mountain, the harbour and Robben Island, the neo-Victorian

architecture exudes a nostalgic old-world glamour. Rooms are beautifully designed and decked out with all the five-star trimmings and the service is impeccable. The revamped Conservatory Restaurant has quickly become one of the waterfront's culinary hotspots while other highlights include a 6,000-bottle wine cellar, an outdoor heated pool, the fabulous Camelot Spa and a calorie-busting afternoon tea. But tear yourself away and take a historical city tour – hop on the cable car to the top of Table Mountain, drive the wine route and enjoy the beauty of Cape Peninsula.

Then it's an easy flight (via Johannesburg) to Livingstone and the pride of Zambian hospitality. The Royal Livingstone is situated on the Zambian side of the Victoria Falls and stretches along the forested banks of the great Zambezi River. Just a short walk to the entrance of the falls, this is one-in-a-million for location. The local tribespeople call the Victoria Falls Mosi-oa-Tunya – 'the smoke that thunders' – and guests can watch the cloud-like spray create a multitude of rainbows. A mass of 17 colonial-style buildings – complete with huge verandas – house 173 beautiful rooms and suites as well as a



Clockwise from top: Table Mountain, Cape Town; The Royal Livingstone and 'smoke that thunders', Zambia; The Palace of the Lost City and the Lost City Golf Course, Sun City; The Table Bay Hotel on the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town



superb restaurant. Herb and rose gardens add a sense of peace, as do the riverbank spa treatments. But this is a place to enjoy the great outdoors: from fishing, white-water rafting, boat cruises and canoeing to elephant-back safaris, helicopter flights, abseiling and gorge swinging.

From a spot like no other to the remote South African bushveld, the SunLux journey continues to The Palace of the Lost City, rising like a mirage from its rugged surroundings. This was Sol Kerzner's flagship masterpiece and remains true to its opulent roots with mind-boggling detail including a 300,000-piece mosaic. Rooms and suites are pure luxury and offer everything from inter-connecting family rooms to wow-factor Royal Suites. The restaurants are top notch, particularly Afro-French fusion Plume and The Grill Room for melt-inthe-mouth steak. There are two 18-hole golf courses, a spot-on spa and entertainment galore, but it is again the location that delivers the x-factor. Just minutes from Pilanesburg National Park, safaris here take in elephant, rhino, lion, leopard and antelope roaming through their natural habitat - a fitting end to a mesmerising journey.

To book the Golden Triangle Journey and the SunLux Collection properties, visit suninternational.com/sunlux or call 0027 11 780 7878.

For a chance to win a trip to experience the Golden Triangle with flysaa.com go to cntraveller.com/promotions/sunlux



THE FASANO, SAO PAOLO

In the heart of Jardins, the smartest neighbourhood in the city, this glamorously understated hotel – all elegant creams and browns – is the place for superlative though expensive Italian food and classic cocktails on-the-rocks, served at the Baretto bar with its live bossa-nova nights and simmering atmosphere. But what many people don't know is that the 22nd floor has a small but sensational spa, as well as a steam, sauna and a tranquil swimming pool with a view. There are five smart suites where you can book everything from an Ayurvedic head massage to

shiatsu and reflexology. But if there's time, the Cleopatra Bath is a must. The experience (which takes two-and-a-half-hours) begins with body-hair bleaching (very popular in Brazil) and follows with a natural exfoliation using sesame seeds, salt and creams, a body immersion in milk (hence the name), essential oils and rose petals, a moisturising wrap with honey and freshly grated carrots (yes, really) and, finally, a nourishing and calming lymphatic-drainage massage. BOOK IT +55 11 3896 4000; www.fasano.com.br. Doubles from about £540

THE MAJESTIC, KUALA LUMPUR



Little remains of the city's colonial architecture: these days all the action is in its glitzy high-rise towers. So this hotel makes a delightful change. It's one of the oldest and grandest buildings around, recently restored to all its 1930s glory. The bedrooms are monochrome and elegant, the bathrooms glorious. And best of all is the new spa (housed in former garages where Bentleys were kept for visiting Englishmen). The original Deco details have been retained and the interior, all long lines and clean white space, is inspired by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Pimm's is poured on arrival and the music is appropriately Gatsby-esque. The range of treatments - from the firm Swedish massage to a full-blown jet-lag recovery may not be particularly extensive, but they are very well done. Therapists have sweet smiles and strong hands; a few of them were poached from the award-winning spa at Pangkor Laut. They begin by massaging head and shoulders while you sit with feet soaking in petal-strewn hot water in old-fashioned basins glazed with cabbages and roses. Leave unravelled and lithe, warm as steamed noodles. BOOK IT +603 2785 8000; www. majestickl.com. Doubles from £160. Malaysia Airlines (www. malaysiaairlines.com) flies from Heathrow to Kuala Lumpur



For the ultimate in stylish summer evenings look no further than the newly refurbed and dramatically transformed Aqua Nueva



and cuttlefish with blue potatoes and salt cod brandada. And who could resist the mouthwatering sound of moreish secreto with gambas and smoked aioli?

Before taking your place in the elegant – yet fabulously relaxed – restaurant, where better to start with a drink than their brand new bar? Promising to be London's latest destination hang-out, it's where cocktail creator Luca Missaglia has conjured up an array of tempting Tanqueray Ten cocktails with a Spanish twist, or, why not choose an old school classic along with some tasty Spanish snacks, all served up

while you recline on an elegant banquette. And did we mention this was the ultimate al fresco venue? Summer is when Aqua Nueva comes into its own. Their chic bar opens on to a 5th-floor roof terrace, re-imagined as a beautiful Spanish garden, just waiting for carefree, refined, outdoor drinking and dining. For more information or to book please call 020 7478 0540 or visit aquanueva.co.uk

lready one of the West End's hottest restaurants, Aqua Nueva is about to reopen its doors after a huge and dramatic makeover. Found at the top of the iconic former Dickens and Jones building, in the heart of London's most sophisticated streets, it has undergone a sweeping transformation, creating an instant modern classic with a strong Spanish flavour.

CLASSIC TWIST

Taking inspiration from Spain's history and the sundrenched streets of its beautiful cities, Aqua Nueva's new look and fabulous cuisine superbly evokes the laid-back evenings that the Spanish do so well. Food here is slick Spanish contemporary, created by head chef Alberto Hernandez whose smaller plates include delights such as chargrilled razor clams with white asparagus and marcona almond vinaigrette,

Clockwise from top: Aqua Nueva restaurant; Aqua style Raspberry cheesecake; Seared scallops with blue potato, mushroom and leek cream; Aqua Nueva Bar



Love it, hate it, or simply using it as a gateway en route to the Sevchelles or elsewhere. Dubai is the epicentre of the Middle East and this is the hotel to book. Check in for at least two nights to enjoy a surprisingly sleek and bling-free hideaway, with 94 tech-savvy rooms, a near-private beach, a fab hangout restaurant and a soothingly calm atmosphere. Spend your days soaking up the sun, flopping out in the awesome pool cabanas: air-conditioned and with a TV, so a total thrill for little ones (under-11s stay for free). And set aside some real time for the ESPA-run spa as well. It's right by the main building and pool which makes it easy to dip into, with a patio off each of the nine treatment rooms. The therapists are charm-on-a-stick, multi-skilled and super-adept. They have to be: there are a lot of super-particular clients in this part of the world, many of them with a lot of time on their hands. Book one of the Remedial Massages, an hour-long, gorgeously tough going-over - choose from no-nonsense sports, shiatsu, Thai or deep-tissue pummelling. Next opt for the softer Reflex Zone Foot Massage, which leaves you walking high. Then, perhaps, a 90-minute Super Active repairing and restoring facial to get the glow. And to finish? A Bastien Gonzalez 60-minute pedicure, but insist on polish: his 'bare is best' mantra can lead to disappointment later. Now you're ready to get back on the plane again - buffed, polished, neatened and sweetened. BOOK IT +971 4440 1010; www.oneand onlythepalm.com. Doubles from about £380





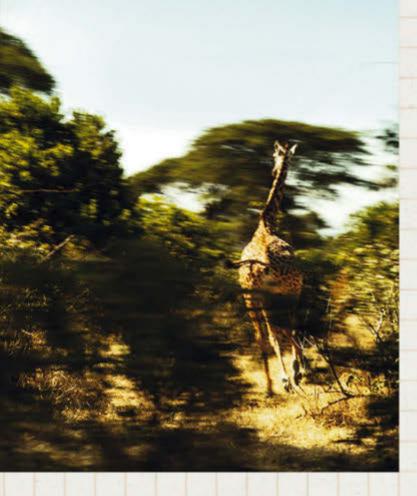
THE SAXON JOHANNESBURG

This sleek mansion is surrounded by acres of gardens filled with jacaranda and fig trees, and is home to the most stupendous spa, not just in Jo'burg but any African city. Flotation pools, jet pools, cold plunge pools and open fires are dotted between the gym, sauna and steam rooms. There are six treatment rooms for Carita, QMS, Elemis and Dermalogica facials and body massages, and even a Byzantine-style mosaic chamber for a rasul ritual with African exfoliators and body masks. But what you really want to try is the transformational sound therapy with Cheryl Young, which draws on ancient wisdom from Tibetan monks and rebalances energy like nothing you have ever experienced. Lie back on a water-bed that vibrates on areas where you're subconsciously holding tension (your hips, shoulders, stomach), with Buddhist singing bowls placed on chakra centres. Now listen to the primal, hollow sound of Young beating the brass gongs at either end of the bed. Your body sinks. Your mind is finally clear. You are at-one. Afterwards, with the right and left sides of your brain in sync, you'll wonder how you are ever going to move again. The hotel is where Nelson Mandela finished writing Long Walk to Freedom, so you may want to pack a copy. BOOK IT Africa Travel (+44 20 7843 3500; www.africatravel.co.uk) offers three nights from £1,775 including breakfast, flights, transfers and three sound-therapy sessions

Contributors: Alline Cury, Laura Fowler, Sarah Gilbert, Emma Love, Anna Pasternak, Adrianne Pielou, Jonathan Thompson



THE EXPERTS... ADVICE



I am going on safari in Africa for the first time. What would you recommend I pack?

I have seen some extraordinary khaki-and-animal-print coordinated extravaganzas in my 20 years on safari. But since I am of the opinion that critters do not pay much attention to what I am wearing, unless it is bright white or neon, my basic rule is: layer and pack light in a soft-sided bag. The non-negotiables are a pair of breathable hiking boots (good ones can last years), a wide-brim hat, long-sleeved cotton shirts and T-shirts to help keep mosquitoes at bay, a fleece or tracksuit top for chilly mornings and



PETER BROWNE SENIOR EDITOR

nights, and cotton cargo trousers and shorts (I hate those rustling zip-off trouser-shorts). You should also pack a pair of sandals to wear in camp in the hours between morning and evening game drives or walks, the best pair of binoculars you can afford, a camera with a zoom lens and a torch (a head-mounted one). Among the stuff to leave at home is anything too fragranced, blue, as it attracts the biting tsetse fly, or camouflage (this isn't a Rambo movie). And finally, I always take a couple of kikoys - a traditional wrap from the Swahili coast that serves as a scarf, emergency headgear or towel - in a small daypack as hand luggage.

My young goddaughter wants to become a travel writer. How should she get started?

Does she write good thank-you letters? If she looks appalled at the question, use her ambition to become a professional writer to focus on this great but neglected skill. You will gain directly from this encouragement, which can be developed side-by-side with your godchild. A treat at an unusual restaurant, a trip to a



BARNABY ROGERSON WRITER

festival or a picnic by a ruin can be the seeds of adventure for which you will expect a sequence of increasingly polished letters. The craft of thank-you letters also allows an embryonic writer to focus on addressing just one person (whom she already knows), and if she cannot make this one character smile or chuckle with glee at her particular take on your shared memories. one might wonder if writing really is her game. The sooner a young travel writer realises that for

every carefree month on the road having adventures, she will be spending an equal amount of time at a desk (if not three times as much), the better for her sense of the eventual reality. For a writer needs to love writing, and to look at a desk not as a prison that she is chained to, but as her window to an audience.

Is social media actually a useful tool for planning a trip? If so, which platforms should I use?

Yes! There's much, much more to social media than embarrassing selfies. If you know where to look, Twitter and Instagram are great for getting up-to-the-minute information. Here are some of my favourites: for foodies going to the USA, Eater aggregates the hottest restaurants and bars; each city has its own Twitter account, and these are the feeds to follow (@EaterNY or @EaterLA for example). Le Fooding (@LeFooding) is similar for France. My favourite new discoveries are @RoutesNorth for Swedish gems and @petitepassport for

the Netherlands and elsewhere. For places to stay, Airbnb also has an addictive Instagram (@Airbnb)

with a pick of top listings from Airstreams in California to treehouses in Chiang Mai. I'm also - and this, I admit, is getting a bit geeky - slightly obsessed with Twitter's list function. Following people and adding them to lists based on where they are or what they talk about focuses the chatter. So if I'm planning a trip to, say, Madrid, I can find the relevant people to ask for their hot tips in one place - I regularly ask Twitter users for their advice before I fly by @tagging them in the tweet. And all this is before we even get started on Pinterest - see www.cntraveller.com/pinterest.



FIONA KERR FEATURES EDITOR

I want more than a thriller to read on my sun lounger. I'm in the mood for some verse. Is there one particular poet whose work suits any trip?



The collected poems of Elizabeth Bishop adapt well to any destination. She was brought up in Nova Scotia, but later relocated to Key West, Florida, which was already becoming known as a writer's refuge thanks to the presence of Wallace Stevens and Ernest Hemingway. Later, on a trip to Brazil in 1951, she fell in love with the architect Lota de Macedo Soares and stayed until 1967. The reason why her poetry travels so well has not so much to do with the diverse places that inspired it as with her sense of what it means to be on the move. Bishop was alive when international flights started to become accessible and her



OLIVIA COLE WRITER s started to become accessible and her concerns prefigured questions that still bother us. She wrote about the hopes and expectations of voyaging and its inevitable disappointments: the gap between what's promised by a guidebook (or, these days, website) and what we actually find. You only have to be in Venice, or anywhere beautiful, for an afternoon to share her dismay at crowds collecting their snapshots of views 'instantly seen and always,

always delightful'. Bishop had a great

capacity for wanderlust and witty description
- and she always makes me think too.



I'm planning a trip to India but want to see the country at my own pace. How can I achieve this?



Book an air-conditioned compartment on Indian Railways. True, it takes longer to lurch along the endless miles of tracks connecting 29 states together like veins on the leaf shape of India. But if like me you enjoy taking pictures, during the 10-minute stops you can dash across the platform into different carriages to photograph the contrasting styles of trayel, fashion and



DAVID CROOKES CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

character – it's like being in a mobile studio. You become the constant and your subjects become the change. The journey can be as glamorous as you choose to make it. Get your clothes mineral-water steamed at a station stall, eat dried gooseberries and seek out the world's finest pineapple milk. Pressed bedding and a pillow mean you can sleep in as late as you like in leather-clad double bunks suspended from the roof by chains and made private by raffishly scruffy burgundy curtains.

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WORLD ON A PLATE

THE FLAVOUR: SICILIAN PESTO

PESTO IS MY SHORTCUT

TO ITALY, LIKE THE

WATERMELON-COLOUR

NAIL POLISH THAT

RECALLS A SLEEPLESS

WEEKEND IN IBIZA

EAT ME By Joanna Weinberg

Childhood summers for me were always abroad. My parents, both displaced South Africans, shivered at the idea of staying in England, like boarders stuck at school after the end of term. Wasn't summer supposed to be hot? Shouldn't it be about basking on beaches and lazing in warm waters? And so we travelled: to tiny craggy Greek islands, gobbling deepfried everything, and cycled along palm-fringed promenades in France. We ate brightly flavoured gelato in overheated cobbled Italian streets, and fought for room at the bow of tiny, chugging speedboats on turquoise Turkish waters. But this year, I am building a kitchen and the piggy bank will not stretch to such frippery. Instead, my own family will travel by fridge alone. I have a handful of constant companions in the culinary travel department: intense Tamari soy sauce, Japanese pickled ginger, sharp capers, Dijon mustard, brightgreen Tuscan olive oil and aged crystalline Parmesan, scattered liberally and without respect for the authentic ethnicity of the resulting dish. And then, of course, there

is pesto. To me, pesto is one of those things that is at once everyday and utterly glamorous – like the small bar of heady lavender soap that is all Provence, or watermelon-coloured nail polish that recalls a sleepless weekend in Ibiza. Pesto is my shortcut to Italy. While the inner pedant declares there is no such thing as 'Italian' cooking – there is, rather, Ligurian cooking,

Roman cooking, Venetian cooking – as far as my greed is concerned there is always pasta, and where there is pasta, there is pesto. It is not necessarily Italian at all; it simply means 'pounded'. So the classic pesto of basil, pine nuts, Parmesan, garlic and olive oil of Liguria is no more authentic than the pistou of southern France, the pulverised paste of basil, garlic and oil, so perfect stirred into fish soups or simply for dunking chunks of crusty bread into. At home in Somerset, I will make pesto from the wild garlic in the woods in spring, from peppery rocket or garden-picked dandelion combined with pungent local Cheddar through summer months, and by winter I will favour the bitter flavours of watercress, blue cheese and walnuts. Truly though, the pesto that most transports me is this one, from Sicily. It is a summer of riding pillion on a Vespa behind a sockless boy with a pink sweater slung round his shoulders.

DRINK ME By Malcolm Gluck

There is something so graphically Mediterranean about pesto that a sunny red or white wine it has to be. But what wine, you cry, to partner the chef? A good bottle to hand while preparing food is always welcome, but when it comes to making this Italian staple, a glass on the worktop is de rigueur. Indeed, a gastronomic thesis could surely be written on the differences between a pesto made by a cook with a glass or two to hand and one prepared by a sobersides. Is this because the various stages in this sauce's manufacture are like a construction project and frequent refreshment is not indulgent but actually essential? I rather think so. My suggestion, then, is **Pelorus 2009**, the Kiwi sparkling wine – under £20 a bottle if you buy a brace or more at Majestic (at Sainsbury's it is £22). This elegant, civilised bubbly more than stands comparison with many a fabled Champagne costing a good deal more. If you prefer a still white wine while you slave, I have two to recommend, and each comes from Corney & Barrow. Fiano Masseria Bianca 2013 (Italy, £8.95) has a smoky peachiness; **Terre de Lumière Viognier 2013**

(France, £8.25) a blossomy orchard-fruit flavour. For a couple of white suggestions, and one red, to go with that pesto we will stay with the C&B shelves. **Bodega Ruca Malen Chardonnay 2011** (Argentina, £12.75) is sleeker than a fine white Burgundy and a good deal less pious (and plumper on the finish). **The Lane Gathering Sauvignon/Semillon 2010** (Australia, £20.95) is a ravishing display of burnt butter and Ogen

melon. And a red for that pesto dish? C&B has Il Pino di Biserno 2010 (£34.50), a gorgeous Cabernet Franc/Merlot/ Cabernet Sauvignon/Petit Verdot mélange sveltely engineered by Swedish winemaker Helena Lindberg in that part of littoral Tuscany called the Maremma. It has the ineffable classiness of truly exceptional wine because, though polished, it has edge. I can only define this, as novelist Vladimir Nabokov did, as the spinal element of an aesthetic interlude, which causes the hairs on the back of the neck to quiver. If a wine like that seems a mite on the pricey side for the peasant piquancy of pesto, then let me recommend the red partner to the Ruca Malen above. This bodega's **Petit Verdot 2012** is superbly bustling, berried up to its neck in roasted fruit. To finish a feast like this, however, we shall return to Majestic. Roger Groult Resérve Three-Year-Old is the finest young Calvados I've tasted in many a year and costs £30 a bottle. Sip it with amaretti.



WHERE ARE YOU?

ALL SEEMS QUIET and still now but not so long ago this dusty plain – known as the Sea of Sand – was enveloped in a swirling cloud of smoke and ash. In the middle of the plateau is an active volcano, and every so often it rumbles and belches forth bubbling lava and hot black rocks.

The rectangular construction left of centre is a Hindu temple, and the volcano itself is named after the god of creation.

There is a curious tradition among devotees

from nearby villages of making offerings to the mountain spirits by hiking up to the 2,329-metre peak to throw fruit, vegetables, flowers and even livestock into the volcano. Its origin comes from a 15th-century legend about a childless princess and her husband who begged the gods to help them have a family. The deities granted the couple 24 children but demanded that the 25th child be hurled into the fiery mountain as a human

sacrifice. Today there's a risky side to the ritual. Some local people climb down the steep sides of the smoking crater and try to catch the food thrown in by worshippers. And 11 years ago two visitors were killed by rocks from a volcanic explosion.

Where are you? GRAINNE McBRIDE

To enter, identify the mountain where the photograph was taken. Correct answers will be placed in a random prize-draw. For prize details, please turn the page

1. Entries for the Where Are You? competition can be sent on a postcard, by email or online (stating your full name, address and telephone number), and must correctly identify the place described according to the instructions given. 2. Entries must arrive no later than the last day of the month on this issue's cover. 3. The Where Are You? competition is open to readers of Condé Nast Traveller who are 18 or older on the date of entry, except for employees of Condé Nast Publications, participating promotional agencies, contributors to Condé Nast Traveller, and the families of any of the above. 4. The winner will be announced at www.cntraveller.com/competitions. Entries by post should be sent to: Where Are You? competition, Condé Nast Traveller, wogue House, 1 Hanover Square, London W1S 1JU. Email entries should be sent to: compcntraveller@condenast.co.uk.

To enter online and for full terms & conditions, visit www.cntraveller.com/competitions. The answer for April's competition is the Pamir Mountains





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Mandy Gore-Booth and Emily Lewis

SPA GUIDE 2015

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BEST HOLISTIC HIDEAWAY THE ARRIGO PROGRAMME, SOMERSET

MOST INDULGENT SPA THE CHEDI ANDERMATT, SWITZERLAND

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GREECE

WHICH ISLAND ARE YOU?

Discover the perfect Greek island to suit your holiday persona. For present day gods and goddesses of the sun, the sea or the land and all its bounties (including glorious vistas from on high); of love, of wisdom (think of all that history) or, indeed, of some rather fabulous wines, Greece's multitude of islands ensures a match made in holiday heaven

Words: Liz Delliere



GREECE HICH ISLAND ARE YOU?

GR←←←← CAPSULE WARDROBE



CLOCKWISE FROM MAIN: THE BLUE WATERS OF ZANTE'S BEACHES; THE VILLAGE OF FIROPOTAMOS, MILOS; THE BEACH AT PORTO ZANTE HOTEL, ZANTE FIRIPLAKA BEACH, MILOS



BREATHTAKING BEACHES



1. HEROES COTTON BLAZER, THE GIGI, £630, TRUNKCLOTHIERS.COM 2. MERISE FISHFOOT SWIMMING SHORTS, £180, BOYS FISHFOOT SHORTS. £95.00, BOTH BY VILEBREQUIN, VILEBREQUIN.COM 3. SIDEWALK LINEN TOWEL, FRESCOBOL CARIOCA, £120, FRESCOBOLCARIOCA.COM 4. VARCA SANDAL, TOAST, £44, TOA.ST 5. SQUARE DUFFLE, TUMI, £1,495, TUMI.COM 6. BELT, FRESCOBOL CARIOCA, £75, FRESCOBOLCARIOCA.COM

Prefer your beaches bare of other people? For off-thebeaten-track beauty, make tracks for Milos, a sleepy island halfway between Athens and Crete where volcanic influences have created wild landscapes and a veritable paint box of coastal hues on this 'island of colours'. Pick your beach to suit your mood from 70 or so splendid beauties: sporting white, black, pink and even red sands, coming in all shapes and sizes - from the perlite, snow-like sand at Firiplaka to ground shells, delicate pebbles and coloured rocks at Provatas. Beyond the beaches you can swim in waters of turquoise, azure, emerald, green, red and violet (at some places along the east coast colours even come in a kaleidoscopic combination). Visit in September and October and the evening light only seems to enhance the palette. And then there are the added pleasures of hot spots from thermal waters at Aghia Kiraki; soaring arches and grottos to explore; and the boat ride out to Milos's satellite islands with their own secluded beaches and beautiful landscapes. Bliss.



et's face it, when it comes to sun, sea and glorious sands, the Greek islands have it in bucket and spade loads. But the Zeus of fabulous beaches is undoubtedly the island of Zante. The most southerly of the Ionian islands, it is also one of the most popular - for good reason.

All along the southeastern shores, crescent after crescent of sands as white as Athena's dresses wend across the coast. Beaches to relax on, beaches to be pampered on (especially if you stay at the Porto Zante Hotel & Spa); beaches that are frequently voted among Europe's top spots. Beaches replete with bars and tavernas; beaches for those who want to enjoy a stretch of sands to themselves, soaking up the sound of the waves lapping on the shore, while enjoying the feelgood warmth imbued by the omnipresent sun. Beaches from which to watch the traditional boats come in - and even buy your supper from. Beaches where the waters are so vividly coloured, they appear to turn the rocks around them (and the marine life) blue. And for the final flourish, there's Navagio – a postcard-emblazoning icon of beach, its private cove enfolded in beautiful white limestone cliffs and lapped by Ionian waters so clear you can see the grains of sand 10 metres out.



WHICH ISLAND ARE YOU?

or some travellers, the scene (and everything else) is set with the views. But there are views and there are views. Santorini's are sensational. Sea and sky merge in vast oceanic panoramas, the sun's heat casting an almost mystical haze on the horizon. Vast, rugged cliffs plummet vertically into churning waters that make it impossible not to think of Greece's seafaring mythological heroes of old. Higgledy piggledy white villages seem to tumble down the hillside in a gravitydefying sprawl, their arches and whitewashed walls interspersed with splashes of bright pink and red bougainvillea. For some of the best views look no further than Fira, Santorini's capital, a marriage of Venetian and Cycladic architecture, whose white cobblestone streets bustle with shops, tavernas and cafés that cling to the rim of a volcanic caldera nearly 300 metres above the port (a cable car carries you up to the best spot). At sundown the only place to be is Oia town, at the other end of the caldera, with its whitewashed walls sunken into the volcanic rock and its blue domes rising above the stunning russet colours of Ammoudi Bay - said to be the setting for some of the most beautiful sunsets in the world.

For views of a more mellow kind, the smaller island of Folegandros offers a less familiar perspective of

Greece, with a genteel atmosphere that has earned it the mantle 'island of peace'. Wander among the tiny shops, typical kafeneio and tavernas of its small villages; meander along roads that wind their way among terraces interlaced with dry-stone walls erected over the centuries to protect cereals grown on the sunny slopes. Explore the deserted hilltops,

awash with the scents carried on the breeze from the carpet of springtime and early summer flowers, thyme and oregano. The hilltop church of Panagia offers a magnificent view of the chora (town) and west coast, while the area around Kastro, a small Venetian fortress built in 1210, will take you back to the Middle Ages. Or, simply sit a while under a tree in the centre of

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: ARCHITECTURE AT FIRA. SANTORINI; THE HILLTOP CHURCH OF PANAGIA, FOLEGRANDOS; STREETVIEW AT VENETIAN FORTRESS KASTRO, FOLEGRANDOS

Folegandros Chora, in one of its three squares, and soak up the sight of hibiscus overflowing from the small wooden balconies; the sounds of this sleepy town, and the scent of the local bread wafting by on a gentle zephyr.





GREECE

VHICH ISLAND ARE YOU?



ee yourself as something of a holiday princess at heart? High-octane glamour and Mykonos have gone hand in hand since the 1960s, when Grace Kelly and Jackie Onassis, the undisputed queens of screen and political society, used to breeze along its shores.

Today, the 'island of the winds' continues its reign as one of the hippest holiday destinations in the Greek islands, combining cosmopolitan class with mega-watt cool. The clue lies in the gleaming yachts moored in its harbour; the boutiques overflowing with famous brands; the the five-star line-up of beautiful hotels adorning its sweeping sands - the Santa Marina, Theoexnia, Agua Blue and San Giorgio, and, the champagne sold on its beaches. For those seeking a more chilled slice of this island paradise, world-renowned spas offer thalassotherapy treatments to soothe post-champagne heads, while the island's rugged landscapes, quieter beaches, picturesque villages, iconic rows of windmills and azure sea, complete with unforgettable sunsets, are guaranteed to soothe the soul.

In contrast, Patmos - a tiny Greek island close to the Turkish coast - is Mykonos's up-and-coming cousin. One of the smaller Dodecanese islands, Patmos is an off-the-radar hang-out for the Greek jet set. This is Greek luxury low-key: don your favourite bikini for lazy days on glorious, sheltered beaches, broken only by long lunches of local seafood brought in that morning by one of the boats bobbing in the harbour. Up the glamour ante during languid evenings spent wandering the wonderfully authentic main town - all whitewashed walls overpowered by a profusion of blossoms, and narrow cobbled lanes winding between the best-preserved Byzantine homes and mansions in the Aegean. And if you feel a little spiritual enlightenment is needed to offset the sumptuous excesses of the 21st century, make your way up to the 11th-century monastery of St John that crowns the hill of Patmos and gaze at the wealth of extraordinary treasury: Byzantine and post-Byzantine icons, embroideries, parchments, patriarchal seals, illuminated manuscripts, rare old books and fabulous frescoes that date back over 800 years.



TRAVELLER PROMOTION

1. LANETTE CHAMBRAY TRENCH, TOMMY HILFIGER, £190, TOMMY.COM 2. PANAMA HAT, FRESCOBOL CARIOCA, £160, FRESCOBOLCARIOCA. COM 3. LINEA ROSSA SUNGLASSES, PRADA, £245, AT SUNGLASS HUT, SUNGLASSHUT.COM 4. DIP DYE LINEN BAG, TOAST, £59, TOA.ST 5. HAND SURF, FRESCOBOL CARIOCA, £160, FRESCOBOLCARIOCA.COM 6. LASSO SANDAL, RUSSELL & BROMLEY, £235, RUSSELLANDBROMLEY.CO.UK

WHICH ISLAND ARE YOU?

f you are more of a wine-in-hand, surrounded by nature kind of traveller, Alonissos is the island for you. Blessed with rugged natural landscapes, draped in pine forests, olive groves and orchards, it is the most remote of the Northern Sporades islands. It also has the added bonus of a historic prowess in wine making - not to mention a deeprooted tradition in folk medicine, kept alive at Miliá's International Academy of Homeopathy. But for the ultimate sense of wellbeing simply wander among almond, grape, fig and olive groves or swathes of scented spruce trees. Stand on innumerable vantage points and gaze across seas that saw Jason and the Argonauts sail to retrieve the Golden Fleece and the Achaeans sail to take on Troy. Alonissos's beaches and crystal-clear waters offer unforgettable peace Sporades provides a refuge for rare seabirds, dolphins and the Mediterranean monk seal. And a day on the surrounding seas might include Yioúra's stalactite cave that sheltered Homer's Cyclops, and is now

home to a rare species of wild goat; Ksiró's pristine

Monastery - or Psathoúra, a volcanic island dominated by the tallest lighthouse in the Aegean.

Wild romantics will fall in love with Lesvos - a favourite for artists and writers. Naturally it is blessed. with traditional villages, scenic harbours, art museums and even a bit of mythology, with Molyvos's ancient

walls said to have been beseiged by Achilles himself. But somehow the light seems lighter, the nature more untouched here. Ancient monuments are in such beautiful, remote places that just finding them is half the fun. Its sweeping bays would enfold other Aegean islands inside them. Petrified forests add an eerie edge to pine-forested



DECEL PRINTED RECORDORADO MADO COMO sandy beaches; Skátzoura's impressive Evaggelistria

+ WALKING



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: RUGGED RAMBLING IN ALONISSOS; BEACH PANORAMA, ALONISSOS; MOLYVOS VILLAGE LESVOS; CASTLE OF MYTILINI, I FSVOS: PORT OF MOLYVOS, LESVOS

landscapes. The island's hot springs have helped keep inhabitants in the pink for thousands of years. Even the fish are said to be healthier, due to their high mineral content (don't miss August's Skala Kaloni Sardine Festival). Best of all, there are more varieties of birds and wildflowers than anywhere in Europe, as Lesvos is a main stop on the springtime migration routes to Africa. Walk alongside salt plains, marshes and tidal pools full of crabs and fish that attract the vast array of birds - even flamingos. Chill out at one of the excellent fish tavernas. Wander over lovely old stone bridges, then stop for a swim in the streams. Spectate at one of the many local horse-riding races through and around the villages. And just enjoy, for days on Lesvos are both laid-back and back to nature.



GREELE

HICH ISLAND ARE YOU?



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: POSEIDONION GRAND HOTEL SPETSES; A RIDE THROUGH SPETSES TOWN, SPETSES; VIEW OF THE VILLAGE OF LINDOS, RHODES

in the picturesque old harbour, with its boats bobbing in the sunshine, and in the colourful houses rising up from the water. Visit Spetses during September and you'll be treated to Armata, an impressive re-enactment of a naval battle that has taken place ever since 1931 (for some of the best views bag a room at the Poseidonion Grand Hotel - a landmark on the Spetses skyline for the past 100 years). And for a battle of an entirely different kind, there is also the Spetsathlon in April, one of the biggest triathlons in Greece.

hink Greece, think ancient civilisations And, set at the crossroads of two major sea routes and three continents, Rhodes is a positive cornucopia of antique cultures. If history is your thing, Rhodes is the place to holiday. First stop the Medieval Town - 24 centuries condensed into a walkable UNESCO World Heritage Site wonder. Classical, Roman, Byzantine, Knight, Ottoman and Italian rulers have all left their mark in an eclectic gathering of fortresses, gates, narrow alleys, minarets, fountains, tranquil squares, mosques and baths. Beyond its walls, the 'new city' proffers magnificent Venetian, neoclassical and modern buildings. If you are architectured out, you can eyeball Aegean inhabitants at the cave-like Aquarium, a key marine research centre. At Rodíni Park you can wander among peacocks and reflect that you are probably walking in the footsteps of Julius Caesar, Cicero and Pompey, who are said to have studied at the School of Rhetoric. Nearby, Saint Stefanos Hill marks the site of Bhodes's Acropolis and hosts the remains of the Temple of Apollo. Head out around Rhodes, and the cultural bounty continues. In steadfastly traditional villages, brightly coloured houses, courtyards paved with pebbles and traditional ceramic plates and hand-woven textiles are omnipresent. Close to Ialissós are the ruins of 3rd-century temples of Zeus and Athena. By day, the enormous crucifix, Via Crucis, offers spectacular views over lalissós Bay; by night, illuminated, it is the view. Take some of the island's excellent wine and head for Mt. Atáviros, or the medieval castle of Atáviros, and enjoy it in all its glory.

More modern history may not have quite the kudos of medieval, but in the case of Spetses it is hard not to be wooed by reminders of its central role in Greece's fight for independence. The revolution flag was raised here on 3 April 1821 - and the island went on to play a significant part in its success. The heroine of the day, Bouboulina, is an island icon (complete with impressive statue); however. Spetses had been playing a key naval role against the Ottoman Empire long before the revolution, having 'dedicated its powerful fleet and its soul to the fight'. Evidence of its naval tradition is omnipresent: in the well-preserved captains' mansions adorning the cobbled streets;



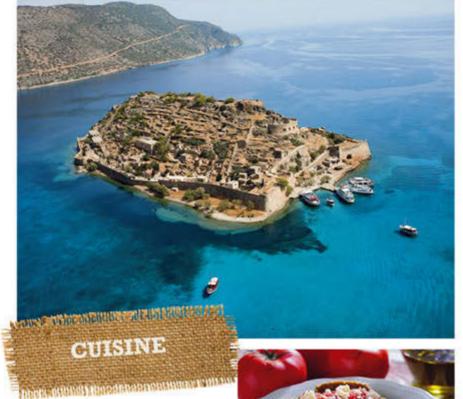
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ancy yourself as something of a foodie? Then where better to feast your imagination than Crete - scientifically proven to produce some of the world's healthiest cuisine. This is an island where the bounty of the earth is brought forth at every table; where every meal is an occasion at which to celebrate with friends.

Wherever you go, cuisine is top of the agenda, Local markets overflow with whatever regional speciality is in season: verdant vegetables and herbs, including wild greens (horta) and unique Cretan Dittany; mountains of oranges, mandarins, melons, pears, figs, grapes, peaches, apricots and the famous Cretan raisins, soultanina; alongside whole grains, pulses and legumes (raw, salted or roasted). And, of course, olives - the king of Cretan cooking (Crete boasts around 60 olive trees per inhabitant), from which comes the island's 'liquid gold'.

Wander Crete's lovely ports and you're bound to bump into a friendly fisherman proffering the day's catch. Hike the hills and you'll catch a waft of the thyme, sage, rosemary and oregano covering the hillsides (and hopefully source some of the divine Cretan honey created from them). Find a taverna and tuck into the endless array of local specialities. Or visit mountainous villages like Anogeia for a taste of original Cretan culinary traditions, such as meat skewered to the ground and grilled against a burning fire. Good food, good health, good times.

Being a small island tucked away in the western Cyclades hasn't stopped Sifnos from stamping its mark on the culinary front, garnering a reputation for fabulous Cycladic cuisine (and producing one of Greece's most famous chefs, Tselementes, who gained international stardom showcasing its flavours and products)



And what flavours and products they are: naturally grown, seasonal foods fresh from the island's wild landscapes and surrounding seas complemented by herbs and spices to create simple, delicious dishes. Take a table at one of the tayernas in the capital, Apollonia, or affluent Artemonas, and dip into delicious homemade dishes. Peruse Sifnos's picturesque kafeneia (coffee shops) and pastry shops, serving local sweets such as pasteli (sesame and honey bar), almond candy, and the famous 'boureki' pie of honey, almond and sesame. From fish taverns to grill houses, such as Heronissos's Troulaki, Sifnos is all about traditional cuisine in fabulous settings.

Tempted? Go for Sifnos's annual Festival of Cycladic

Tasting, and really tantalise your tastebuds with a three-day gastronomic exposition of Cyclades delicacies - not to mention local agricultural specialties, indigenous wines and Sifnian pastries. Add to this cooking demonstrations, local music, island dance troupes and an annual reincarnation of a traditional Sifnian wedding and this is a truly splendid gastronomic affair.



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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PULSES APLENTY, SIFNOS; AERIAL VIEW OF CRETE: DAKOS SALAD, A TRADITIONAL CRETAN DISH: BALOS LAGOON CHANIA, CRETE



n the extraordinary **Peloponnese region**, myth meets historic monuments at every turn. Cross the Corinth Canal, just a couple of hours from Athens, and enter a world of wonders – old and new, natural and man-made. This is the stuff of which legends – and travel memories – are made, with another world-famous site at almost every turn. There's Epidaurus, with its breathtaking ancient theatre: sitting on the 4th-century BC stone seats in the sunshine as a summertime performance of ancient Greek drama plays out below you is an experience not to be missed. While Olympia, on the other side of the leaf-shaped



region, was home to the ancient Olympic Games held in honour of Zeus – and today has the Ancient Stadium, the temples of Zeus and Hera, the palaestra and the workshop of Phedias. Mycenae, which gave its name to an entire civilisation, the Mycenaeans, who flourished from 1,600 to 100 BC, was the kingdom of the legendary Agamemnon, ruler of the Greeks in the Trojan War. And located to the south east is Sparti, a small town with a big history, whose raison d'être was to produce the strongest, bravest warriors in the world. Not to mention Peloponnese's wealth of medieval marvels: the fabulous Venetian, Frankish and Turkish

castles of Náfplio, Methóni, Koroni and Corinth; the strange battle towers and frescoed churches of the Máni; and the extraordinarily well-preserved Byzantine enclaves of Mystra and Monemvasiá.

HISTORY LESSON

When you need a history hiatus, the Peloponnese region is also blessed with some of the most beautiful beaches in Greece (and that is saying something). Inland, rolling forests and mountains are dissected by deep valleys and gorges and dotted with captivatingly traditional villages. Soak up the atmosphere in the medieval coastal town of Nafplion: only two hours' drive from Athens, yet a world away, with its narrow streets of the Old Town and Venetian hill-top fortress. Head for the hills to Kalayryta, set amongst a rugged, rolling landscape - and the nearby Monastery of Mega Spileo, carved against the mountain slope; the Monastery of Agia Lavra, where the Greek Revolution of 1821 was first declared, and the Cave of the Lakes. Promenade along the port in the seaside town of Ermione, a popular weekend retreat for Athenians. Or, for a wander on the slightly wilder side, try Gythio in Mani, a secluded area whose crystal waters and deserted beaches are the preferred spot for endangered sea turtles to lay their eggs. What greater accolade do you need?

BEACH LIFE

On the other side of the country, **Halkidiki** offers a version of Greek heaven all of its own. Tucked away in the north near Thessaloniki, that much furthur



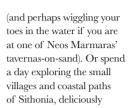
from Athens, this is a region of wild wetlands: willow forests, wading buffaloes, shoring carpets of water lilies and inland ponds. Of never-ending beaches, where the blue of the Aegean meets the rich dark green of the trees, and the scent of pine mingles with the sea's salty brine (and with three peninsulas enfolded by the Aegean Sea and 550km of coastline, finding a deserted spot is never a problem). Of dramatic mountains rising from coastal plains, in turn dotted with mountain villages where visitors are ensured a welcome as warm as it has been for hundreds of years. Or perhaps even 700,000 years, given that Halkidiki is home to the Petralona cave, which sheltered the skeleton of Europe's most ancient man, the Archantrope.



Indeed, Halkidiki naturally has its fair share of historical marvels (all very close by) - including the archaeological site of Vergina, burial site of Alexander the Great's father; the city of Veroia - and Mt Athos, the world's only monastic state, where 20 cliff-top Byzantine monasteries have stood for over 1,000 years. seemingly untouched by time. And in between, you can walk the coastline and wander upon yet another glorious beach or romantic cove calling out for you to spread your picnic blanket. Follow the Wine Route from Agios Pavlos to the Kassandra, Sithonia and Mount Athos peninsulas, stopping at Arnea before reaching the sea at the easterly resort of Olimpiada (don't miss the deep-coloured red velvety vinous affairs produced at Porto Carras, on the sunny slopes of Mount Meliton, from a variety of grape known since Aristotle's time). Stay awhile at one of the fivestar hideaways - such as the Sani or the Ikos - that so wonderfully encapsulate the balance between nature and nurture that Halkidiki is all about. Pick a taverna and savour the simple of joy of peeling fresh prawns



Images provided by the Region of Peloponnese and Halkidiki Hatel Association



positioned between aquamarine seas and bountiful orchards, where you can sample the Halkidiki olives and honey that Aristotle treasured – and ponder on the fact that one of the world's greatest minds was borne of this place. No doubt his surroundings inspired him.

For further details, visit: visitgreece.gr









he Parthenon, towering above the city; the temples of Athene Nike and the Erechtheion; the magnificent temple of Olympian Zeus (6th century BC and one of the largest in antiquity); Hadrian's Arch, the city's symbolic entrance (131 AD); the ancient Theatre of Dionysos (5th century BC) where the works of Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylos and Aristophanes were performed: Athens' lineup is like a 'What's What' of the most instantly recognisable (and arguably, as the cradle of western civilisation, the most important) antiquities in the world. Given the truly spectacular aggregation of edifices - and the views - you could be forgiven for not coming down from the dizzying heights of the Acropolis (high city) to explore the rest of Athens. But then you would miss out on its wealth

of other attractions - old and modern. Only 300m away from the sacred rock stands the impressive Acropolis Museum, one of Athens' most important contemporary works of architecture; all steel, glass and concrete on the outside, over 4,000 priceless finds from the nearby monuments on the inside. Close by, you can while away charmed hours in the historic districts, with their restored 19th-century neoclassical homes, pedestrianised streets, shops, restaurants and picturesque Roman ruins. Ponder justice past at Areios Pagos, the world's most ancient law court, then wander up Philopappou Hill, with its beautiful cobbled roads. Or head for the Ancient Agora - the heart of public life in Socrates and Plato's day, and still home to excavated temples, colonnaded arcades and artefacts spanning five millennia.

But a weekend in Athens definitely doesn't equate only to ancient monuments. Upscale Kolonaki offers a wealth of cafés, boutiques and galleries; Kifissia is the hot-spot for high-end shopping, while Plaka's the place for local souvenirs, from traditional sweaters to jewellery. Dominated by the beautiful old Royal Palace - now the House of Parliament - Syntagma Square is the political epicentre of Athens, and Omonia and Exarheia are a must for the extraordinary treasures in the National Archeaological Museum. Come twilight, head for one of Athens' 12 hills (Lycabettus is the best, commanding clear views across the Attica basin and the Aegean sea). And come evening, do as the locals do and head for uber-cool Gazi or Agia Irini's Square, packed with bars, music venues and art spaces - or simply cosy up at one of the city's open-air cinemas and settle in for yet another unforgettable Athens experience.





Then there's **Thessaloniki** – in the north part of the country. Laying claim to being Greece's cultural capital, the city has produced some of its greatest musicians, artists, poets and thinkers. In 2013, National Geographic magazine included Thessaloniki in its top travel destinations worldwide, while in 2014 the Financial Times fDi magazine declared Thessaloniki 'the best mid-sized European city of the future for lifestyle'. The first accolade is no doubt due to the city's own wealth of historic wonders, given that Thessaloniki's history spans 2,300 years. An important Roman metropolis and the Byzantine Empire's second wealthiest city, today it is home to numerous enduring symbols of its glorious – and rather stormy – history. Taking a walk through its streets is rather like walking back and forth through time. A veritable open-air museum, Byzantine and other monuments include a staggering fifteen UNESCO World Heritage Sites. In the old part of the city Byzantine and Ottoman architecture encompasses mosques, hammams, churches, and the Bezesteni - a 15th-century cloth market with distinctive lead-covered domes. In contrast, the Vasilissis Olgas Avenue is lined with neoclassical buildings and eclectic late 19th-century architecture. And there are still historic delights being discovered, with a 6th-century central street and monumental gate unearthed during Metro excavations - history reshaping itself under your very feet.

And therein lies the thrill of Thessaloniki: the sense of continuous evolvement. For this is a city in which

past, present and future are beautifully juxtapositioned. You might spend one day perusing the halls of the Archaeological,

Culture or Ethnographic Museums - and the next at the museums dedicated to art, cinema or science and technology. Renowned international festivals range from film (November) and books (May), to the largest bi-annual meeting of the Greek Jewish diaspora. When you are done wondering at the fabulous 15thcentury White Tower, a city hallmark, you can come back down to earth in the present with a wander through Thessaloniki's two beautiful waterfront squares, Platia Elefterias and Platia Aristotelous, where people stroll among buzzing cafés and restaurants. Stop for some mezes (Greek tapas) on a summer's evening and people watch to your heart's content. Alternatively there is the lovely, renovated Ladadika neighbourhood, full of ouzeries, cafés and bistro-style tavernas, or the old port area, with airy restaurants and art galleries in converted warehouses. Venture back in time once more in the Ano Poli district (Epimenidou St. and the wider Kastra area), to find the old Turkish quarter with narrow streets, where children play in front of open doors and music wafts through the air. Or take in one of the many traditional markets: the Modiano, with its pedimented facade and glass roof; Athonos Square, or the Louloudadika (flower market). A 'top travel destination'; a great 'mid-sized city for lifestyle' (and, just to add to the accolades, most recently the '2014 European Youth Capital')? We would have to agree.

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Clockwise from top: Villa's outdoor terrace overlooking the Cove; The infinity heated main pool; View from the Taverna Restaurant; Junior Suite

prinkled across a hillside above the secluded and idyllic Vathi bay, it is love at first sight at Daios Cove. The setting is sublime: lush gardens tumble down to a private crescent of golden sand and from every angle the turquoise sea twinkles under the Mediterranean sun. For beach lovers who don't want to travel too far, this Cretan gem is a little piece of European paradise.

HILLSIDE HAVEN

Sculpted out of the hillside, every stone has been reclaimed, giving Daios Cove excellent green credentials as well as blending it seamlessly into its picturesque setting. While the exterior ticks the authenticity box, inside is a picture of modern minimalism, loved by the design-savvy. With their bespoke service, Daios Cove offers a choice of spacious rooms, suites and villas (many with private seawater pools) to give accommodation options for

everyone. Couples love Daios Cove's romantic location and breathtaking views but also rave about the beach bar with its sun lounger service, the magnificent Anne Semonin spa with two indoor pools and the hotel's vicinity to Agios Nikolaos and Elounda for local action. But it's difficult to venture far when the resort's range of excellent restaurants includes Pangea – an international food bazaar, Taverna, offering Cretan à la carte and Ocean, the fine dining venue. A special ambience makes the latter an evening favourite, and a great precursor to Crystal Box where baristas shake up a signature cocktail and chill-out music floats up into the early hours.

While couples slink off to the sun lounger, spa, bar or town, families can have buckets of fun on the beach. There is an excellent watersports centre offering everything from water-skiing and pedaloes to canoeing and scuba diving; the tailor-made yacht trips come highly recommended, while back on dry

land there's floodlit tennis, yoga, Pilates, cookery lessons and wine tasting. The 39 villas cater brilliantly for families and come in one-, two- and three-bed form. For parents seeking some time out, there are excellent crèche and children's facilities (catering for ages four months to 12 years). There's also Cove Club, a range of services exclusively created for villa guests including breakfast at Ocean Restaurant, a private section of the beach, a children's welcome gift, a pillow menu and a dedicated concierge. Location, luxury sophistication and leisure are topped off by wonderful Greek hospitality. Five-star with all the trimmings, Daios Cove - Luxury Resort & Villas is a masterclass in short-haul beach bliss.

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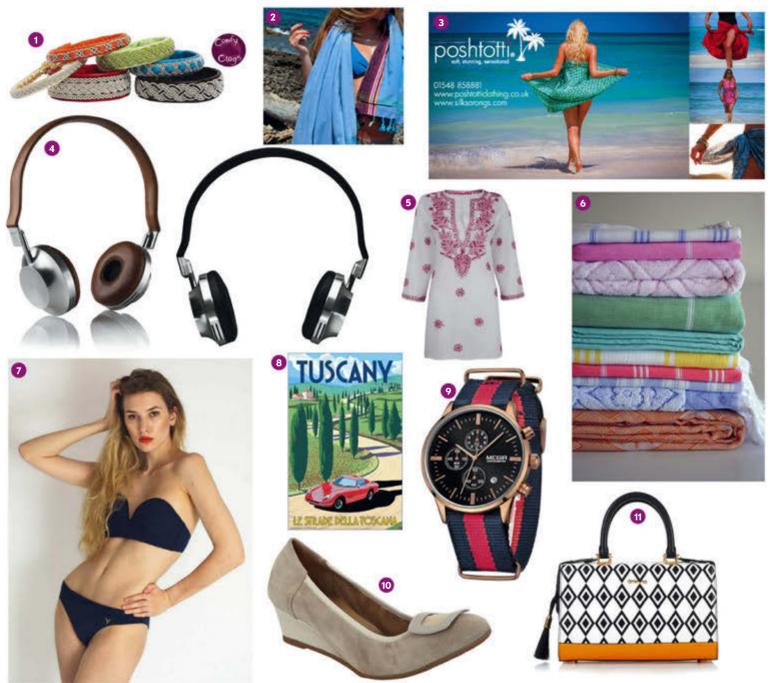
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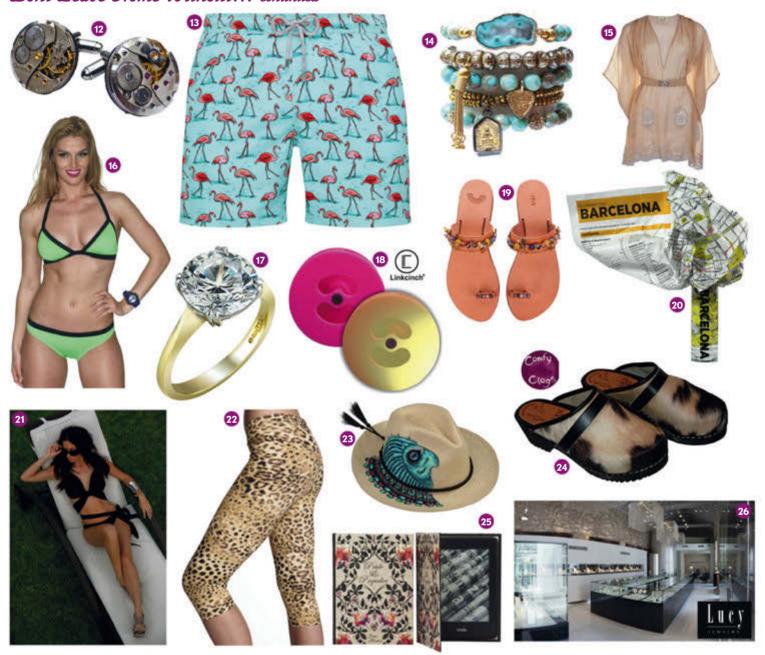
Dont Leave Home Without ...



- 1. COMFY CLOGS. Swedish samibracelets have finally arrived in London! The incredibly popular bracelets you can see on many stars today, are made of reindeer leather with silver and pewter thread with an antler button. Sizes for children, women and men. Visit www.comfyclogs.net or call Ćecilia on 07815 750340 or 020 8780 9767 to find out more. 2. Whether you are holidaying in Cornwall or the Caribbean this summer make sure you take one of these beautiful and stylish **BLUE SUMMER** kikoy towels. Hand-woven in Kenya from 100% natural cotton fibres, these lightweight kikoy towels are easy to pack and dry very quickly. Available in a variety of radiant colours and sizes to suit all family members. Visit www.bluesummerboutique.com
- 3. Going on vacation? Want to feel stunning and look amazing? Feel like travelling light? See POSHTOTTI's fabulous new 2015 collections of luxury silk sarongs that are handmade in one size to fit anyone. Taking you from beach to bar, or to dinner and dancing. They are the smart girls' travel essential. Wear as a scarf, dress, skirt, top, or however you choose. Poshtotti new resort wear perfect beachwear for the discerning woman. View the full range at www.silksarongs.com or www.poshtotticlothing.co.uk or call 01548 858881 for further information. 4. AËDLE. VK-1 headphones by Aëdle make no compromise between sound quality and design. Hand-assembled one by one in France, the VK-1 built with T6066 CNC aircraft grade Aluminium and genuine lambskin leather offer a premium musical experience, thanks to it's Titanium-Neodymium transducers. Price: €390 for Classic and €390 for Carbon. More information at www.aedle.net or email contact@aedle.net
- 5. BEACHCOVER create exquisite hand-embroidered beach kaftans for style conscious women and children. Available in sizes 6-22 and children's age 2-12. Looking for something a little
- different for your next holiday? Visit their website www.beachcover.com or call 01189 404120 for more information.

 6. Whether you are at the beach, swimming pool, sports club or on a boat, make sure you take one of these beautifully striped and stylish OTTOMANIA hammam towels with you. Large yet lightweight, they dry quickly and are easy to fold, making them perfect to pack in any bag or suitcase. They are also suitable for daily use in your bathroom at home. The perfect gift. For more information, see www.ottomania.nl or call +31 237370426.
- 7. MADAME MONTE-CARLO designs and produces luxury swimwear exclusively and officially under the Monte-Carlo name. These elegant, iconic swimwear pieces are hand made in Italy. They reflect the Monaco flag in their lining and they are exclusively on sale in Monte-Carlo and online. The Rafael bikini (pictured) with its padded and sculpted sweetheart neckline comes in navy, red and black. For full collection visit www.madamemontecarlo.com
- 8. PULLMAN EDITIONS designs, commissions and publishes striking original posters which capture the enduring appeal of Art Deco. Their newly-commissioned posters feature winter sports, glamorous resorts around the world, and the world's greatest historic automobiles. All £395 each. Call **020 7730 0547** or view and buy online at **www.pullmaneditions.com** 9. THE GENTLEMEN'S WATCH CO pride themselves on their diverse, yet defined collection of eye-catching timepieces from independent luxury watchmakers and designers. Featured Yachtsman Chrono from Megir boasts a rose-gold polished stainless steel case that gracefully frames a handy 24-hour dial and precision stopwatch. Choose from 6 colour options, £39. Shop Megir at www.gwcwatches.com or email info@gwcwatches.com Quote CONDEJULY for an exclusive 10% discount, expires 30th June 2015.
- 10. BLUE VELVET, the home of contemporary and Luxury footwear direct from the heart of Europe, Always one step ahead, they have established themselves on their quality and first-rate service. Visit them at: 174 Kings Road, SW3 4UP or call 020 7376 7442. Buy online: www.bluevelvetshoes.com
- 11. âme moi is a luxury brand with handbags manufactured on the highest quality leather and crystals application on embroidered silks. LOVER Ruby, is one of the bestseller chosen by celebrities. As its name says, is a true jewel. For more information visit: www.amemoi.com

Dont Leave Home Without ... continued



- 12. VINTAGE WATCH MOVEMENT CUFFLINKS. Crafted from 1920s 1950s watch movements, set with their original ruby jewels, backed with vintage leather and mounted as cufflinks.
- Presented in a vintage inspired box. £49 by Pretty Vintage. Visit: www.pretty-vintage.com or call **07870 607925**.

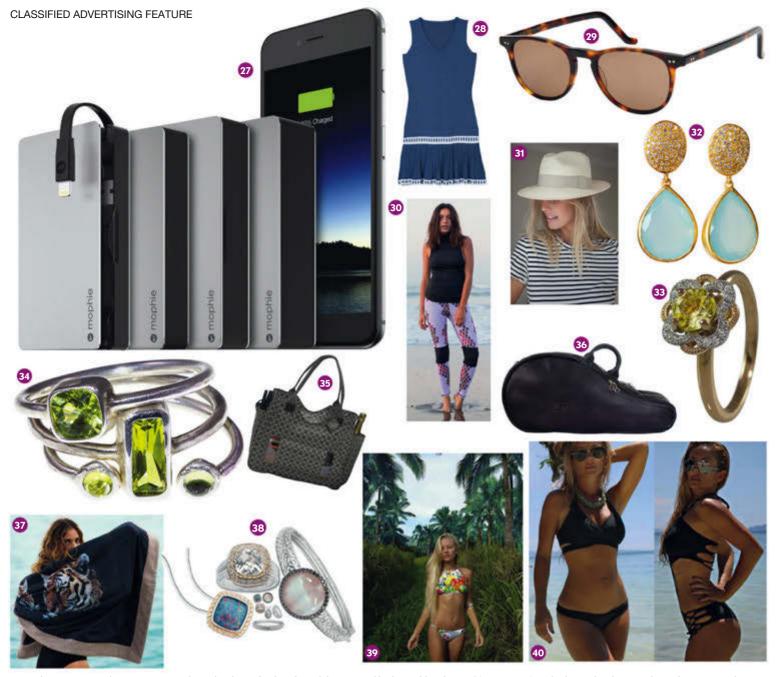
 13. **BLUEMINT**. This Summer is going to be different from all the rest. With its extensive designs, patterns and vibrant colours, Bluemint beachwear offers a breath of fresh air. Bluemint
- meets the consumer with its accessible prices and varied range at www.bluemint.com contact info@bluemint.com

 14. GEMME AMOUR JEWELRY is handcrafted in the USA with the fashion-forward, globe-trotting woman in mind. Add a punch of colour to any holiday outfit with this gorgeous stack of semiprecious gemstone bracelets. Individually priced between £65 £95. Buy online today at www.gemmeamour.com or email sales@gemmeamour.com 15. Shop the new Resort Luxe Collection from FELICE ART COUTURE. All pieces are made by hand in the German studio, featuring timelessly beautiful and effortlessly chic silk kaftans
- 16. DR FASHION designs gorgeous swimwear lines, offering sexy silhouettes and sumptuous, flirty designs. Designed with painstaking attention to detail, they pride themselves on refined designs and using the highest quality material. To view their full range please visit www.dianeraulston.com or email them on diane@diane-raulston.com

 17. KERATIA offers the ultimate replica diamond jewellery in 18 carat gold, from £350. Complete peace of mind when travelling. Visit www.keratia.com 10% off with the offer code
- Traveller2015, expires 31st December 2015.
- 18. The Traveller by LINKCINCH. Never worry about tangled necklaces or jumbled jewelry boxes again! Simply wind your necklace into the Traveller and store or travel. When you retrieve it you'll find the necklace untangled, undamaged, and ready for use. For more innovative jewelry devices: www.linkcinch.com or email linkcinch@protogenz.com

 19. IRIS handmade leather embellished sandals are every woman's dream pair! Comfortable and elegant, great for day to night adding sparkle to your outfit. IRIS Brand offers limited edition collections of fashion accessories, featuring timeless designs and beautiful detailing alongside true craftsmanship. Visit www.irisandals.com or email contact@irisandals.com
- 20. These Crumpled City Maps by PALOMAR are the lightest maps in the world–indestructible, soft and waterproof; they can be crumpled into any bag or pocket. A must have travel accessory! Visit www.stonegift.com or and enter promo code CITYMAP1 to receive 10% off all Palomar products expires on 31st July 2015. sales@stonegift.com
 21. MAVELE SWIMWEAR are a London-based luxury brand, which aims to create swimwear that looks fabulous and works with the different shapes and sizes of women, and their needs.
- And their needs. Mayele's collection of stylish and luxury swimwear is inspired by a Day-to-Night, Beach-to-Bar ethos. From flirty feminine, edgy chic to classic elegant pieces, there is something for everyone. Whether you're a beach babe or a poolside siren, their mix and match sets in high quality fabrics will make you look and feel gorgeous. Having launched their new website, you can shop the full collection at www.mavele-swimwear.com and enter promotional code 'CNTRAVELLER' to receive an exclusive 20% discount (valid until 5th July 2015).

 22. SHADI ACTIVEWEAR. "My new favourite pants! So comfortable they're like a second skin, dry after a sweaty class and no sliding down" Mona Heep Yoga. 20% off your first order enter code TRAV20 ends 31 July 2015. Follow them @shadiactivewear.com
- 23. Discover IBO-MARACA, an exotic luxury brand of panama hats and bags inspired by the tropical beauty of South America. Exquisitely hand-painted by distinguished Greek artists, each hat is a unique piece of art communicated and worn through fashion. Discover more at www.ibo-maraca.com Or email them at info@ibo-maraca.com
- 24. COMFY CLOGS are handmade in Sweden and available in a range of the latest fun and funky styles and colours. Sizes for women and children. Perfect and practical for pregnant women and useful in the house and garden! Real skin Clogs available in a variety of styles. Call Cecilia on 07815 750340 or 020 8780 9767 for a brochure. Visit www.comfyclogs.net 25. Premium quality kindle and iPad covers, handmade in the UK by KLEVERCASE. Go to www.klevercase.co.uk to view their range of book themed stationery and gifts.
- 26. LUCY JEWELRY. Just a few steps from Santo Domingo Plaza, you will find Lucy Jewelry, a venue which is part of a seventeenth century mansion. An atmosphere where the refinement, innovation and cutting edge are combined in jewellery for its elegance and captivating originality. The ancient art of goldsmith with traditional techniques and new technologies are the key in the manufacture of each piece. In Lucy Jewelry you will find a serene environment for contemplation and trading; as commission agents are not allowed, this jewellery store can guarantee a great price on your purchase. To view their full range visit www.lucyjewelrycartagena.com



27. With it's aerospace aluminum casing with anodized satin finish, soft touch housing and built-in cables, the mophie powerstation plus line is the ultimate solution for power on-the-go. Delivering 2.4A of power, the powerstation plus line consists of four different battery size options letting you extend the battery life of your mobile device by up to 8 times, while smart-charging circuitry provides the perfect amount of power for a safe, quick charge. The built-in micro USB or Lightning cables are housed in a discreet hideaway compartment. When connected to a computer or wall outlet, these cables allow users to simultaneously charge both the powerstation plus and their device. With an extra USB port for the higher capacity models, users can quickly charge up to two devices at the same time at 2.4A each. Apple certified starting at £69.95. For more info visit uk.mophie.com

28. L'ETOILE SPORT is a New York City based brand that designs sportswear for the stylish, classy woman. Their philosophy is play all day, combining function and high end fashion. To

view their full collection visit www.letoilesport.com

29. C.W. DIXEY & SON OF LONDON has been creating elegant eyewear for a discerning, sophisticated clientele since 1777. Choose C.W. Dixey & Son frames and you join an elite group of iconic clients including Sir Winston Churchill, Napoleon, and Emperor Qianlong of China. It's quite a story. Be part of their next chapter. Visit www.cwdixeyandson.com or call them on +44 (0)1932 867467

30. Introducing SALT GYPSY's first artist print collaboration with print designer, Jessica Rosheen. Based in Byron Bay, Jessica used a diving adventure in the Byron seas as a starting point for this design aimed specifically at standing out in a crowded lineup. Salt Gypsy is a surf lifestyle brand offering ocean activewear and experiences for the discerning woman of the water. To view their full range visit www.saltgypsy.com 31.ARTESANO. Hand-woven in Ecuador, Artesano panama hats are a blend of age-old techniques with fashionable designs. Part of the proceeds of every hat sold goes to the non-profit

TECHO www.techo.org in support of creating sustainable communities and overcoming poverty in Ecuador and Latin America. Visit www.artesano.net or call +1 305 934-4324 for

32. JEN NICHOLL JEWELLERY is known for their modern and classic designs. All pieces highlight the natural beauty of gemstones. Featured here are the Teardrop Aqua Chalcedony Earrings (\$230). visit www.jennicholl.com or email info@jennicholl.com

33. SIMON WRIGHT JEWELLERY is getting ready for summer with his beautiful new collection of floral pieces. Each item is individually made for you using an array of precious stones and metals, each with a delicately feminine twist on a classic. By appointment only. Contact: 020 7490 0665 or visit www.sw-jewellery.com

34. INDIA MAHON is an independent jeweller. Her Cotswold boutique is an inviting space, where she designs and makes her bold, beautiful, laid back jewellery, inspired by colourful vintage textiles. Using silver, Fairtrade gold and ethically sourced gemstones, underpinned by good old fashioned customer service. India Mahon's British, ethical jewellery is made with love, by hand, available exclusively from her Cotswold boutique or website www.indiamahon.com Contact india@indiamahon.com or 01451 830676.

35. This Award Winning Charlotte Beach Bag from THE OLD BAG COMPANY is the perfect bag for the beach or around the pool with pockets for flip flops, magazines, a bottle of wine, mobile phone and even a clip for your car keys RRP £47.99. View their full range at www.theoldbagcompany.com or call them on 01548 853444.

36. Luxurious leather tennis bag by English lifestyle designer ALISON VAN DER LANDE. Available in 2 or 4 racquet size, black, pink, white, silver, navy, brown & personal commissions welcome. The perfect playing partner. Call them on 01420 488552. To view their full range vist www.alisonvanderlande.co.uk
37. Born by the water and bred under the Greek sun, the SUN OF A BEACH towels and accessories will become your best summer companions and tokens of your most amazing summer

memories. Find them on www.sunofabeach.com and on selected retailers around the world, or email info@sunofabeach.com

38. EUPHORIA GEMS, elegant interchangeable jewellery in sterling silver is inspired by life in the Caribbean. It allows you the freedom to create your own look! To see their full range visit www.euphoriagems.com or email stores@euphoriagems.com To speak to them call +297 5935628.

39. LYCHEE SWIMWEAR presents a range of feminine styles and prints. Designed in Venice, California and produced in Italy, Lychee Swimwear was created by designer Aleksandra Krauze, who spent her teenage years in the waters of South Pacific. This young European Designer developed her passion for tropical nature and the Ocean, with the brand constantly surprising with new jungle inspired prints. To view their full collection visit: www.lycheeswimwear.com Model: Lili @ lilikoi

40. FORÉVER YOUNG Swimwear is leading the way as Summer's must have bikinis! The quality, comfort and versatility of this trend setting brand makes them a perfect choice for your next beach vacation. Forever Young claims to give you everything that you would want in your favorite new bikini and from what we have seen they have certainly delivered. Oh, and their prices will be sure to leave a smile on your face! To view their full range visit www.foreveryoungswimwear.com or email info@foreveryoungswimwear.com

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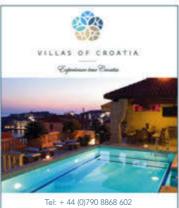
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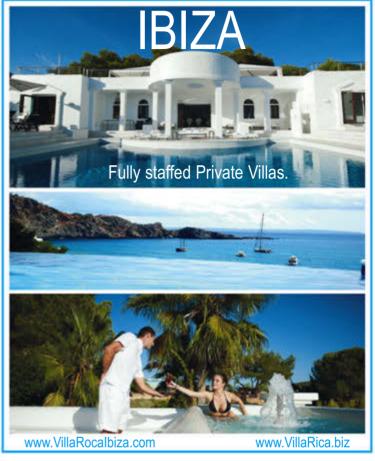
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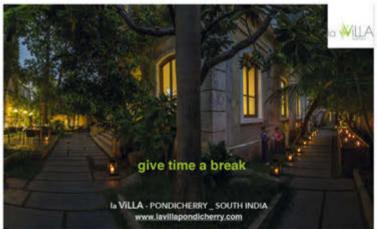


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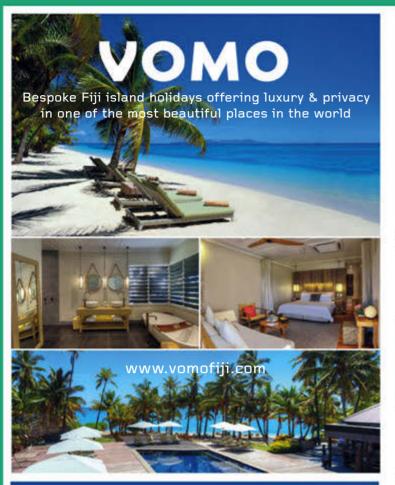






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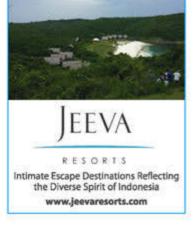


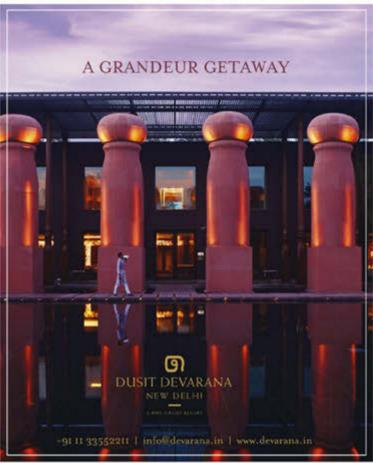


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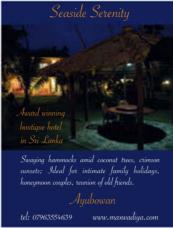




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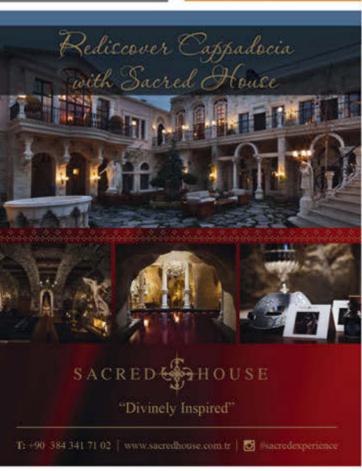
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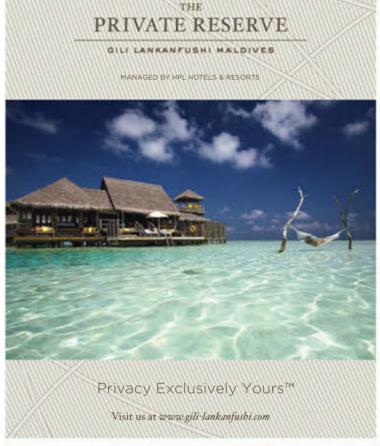




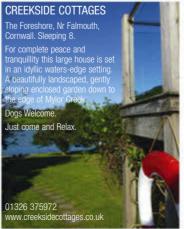


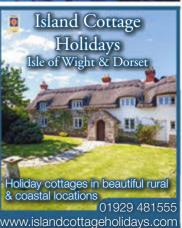












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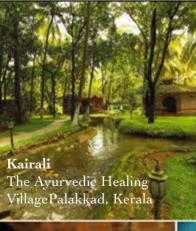
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VIEWWITHAROOM

WHERE ARE WE? LITTLE RIVER PUREPOD, NEW ZEALAND

WHY WE LOVE IT Is it a room? Hard to say. But it most certainly has a view, and in every direction – up, out and down. Views are the point of this futuristic, freestanding glass box in a wraparound of sky and native New Zealand bush. Nothing inside spoils the panorama, not carpet, curtains or ceiling. Even the bedhead is glass. At night the Milky Way is a silvery arc above your head, by day the Pacific a distant shimmer of blue. Hills and valleys ripple away right and left. Flowers bloom beneath the transparent floor. This isn't a hotel, or even close, though it's luxurious and well-equipped. It's just you: the great outdoors and your self-contained retreat from the world, where solar power makes everything work, worms take care of the waste and filtered rainwater is piped from the shearing shed of a nearby farm. Otherwise there's no one for miles. No one waiting on arrival, no staff and no service, or none that you need meet or see. You make your own tea or coffee, take supper from the tiffin in the fridge, serve yourself homemade granola in the morning. There's no Wi-Fi, no TV, no phone signal - but pity the soul in this Eden who craved the outside world. Should you need it, help is a sun-powered satellite-phone call away. What do you do here? You decompress. You slow down. Look at the night sky (star chart provided). Watch the hovering hawks (binoculars, also provided). Listen to the surround sound of birdsong and breeze. Perhaps only a tented safari puts you as close to nature, with the difference that in the New Zealand bush there are fewer things that will chase, kill, bother or poison you. Just ferns under your feet and stars over your head. TIM JEPSON +64 21 226 9764; www.purepods.com. Doubles from about £195





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